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LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE

DELIVERED IN THE  
CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, BATH,

BY THE  
REV. J. N. SWEENEY, O. S. B.

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## CONTENTS.

## LECTURE SIX

	PAGE.
The Holy Catholic Church, . . . . .	3

## LECTURE XX.

Marks of the Church. Unity. - - - - - 18

## LECTURE XXI.

Marks of the Church. Holiness, - - - - - 25

## LECTURE XXII.

Marks of the Church. Catholicity, . . . . . 55

## LECTURE XXIII.

Marks of the Church. Apostolicity, - - - - 75

## LECTURE XXIV.

Papal Supremacy. Scripture. - " - - - 95

## LECTURE XXV.

Papal Supremacy. History, &c. . . . . 114

## LECTURE XXVI.

Creed of Pope Pius IV, " " " " " 131

# CONTENTS.

## LECTURE XXVII.

	PAGE
Tradition, . . . . .	147

## LECTURE XXVIII.

Church and Scripture, . . . . .	163
---------------------------------	-----

## LECTURE XXIX.

The Sacramental System, . . . . .	179
-----------------------------------	-----

## LECTURE XXX.

The Sacrament of Penance. (No. 1.) . . . . .	199
--	-----

## LECTURE XXXI.

The Sacrament of Penance. (No. 2.) Satisfaction and Indulgences, . . . . .	219
---	-----

## LECTURE XXXII.

The Blessed Eucharist. (No. 1.) Real Presence, . . . . .	239
--	-----

## LECTURE XXXIII.

The Blessed Eucharist. (No. 2.) Sacrifice of the Mass. Communion under one kind, . . . . .	258
---	-----

## LECTURE XXXIV.

The Sacraments,—(Continued), . . . . .	275
--	-----

## LECTURE XXXV.

Original Sin and Justification, . . . . .	290
---	-----

## LECTURE XXXVI.

Purgatory, . . . . .	30
----------------------	----



**LECTURES**  
**ON**  
**CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.**

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**LECTURE XIX**  
**THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.**





## LECTURE XIX.

### THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The Article of the Creed to which, with an abrupt transition, I am now to call your attention, is, like all the Articles of the Creed, an important one; but owing to circumstances it may be considered in some respects the most important of all. It is important, like the other articles, from the very fact of its being inserted as an Article in that brief compendium of the Faith, which contains what the Apostles deemed to be the essentials of Christianity. It is most important, because it is one which stands between us and God, which He has made to bear His authority, to speak in His name, to be His representative on earth; an institution which stands so prominently before us, of which we ourselves form, or if we hope to be saved, must form a part. Other Articles declare truths which are invisible; this one announces a fact clear and open as the noon-day sun. Others tell us of truths most sacred, most solemn, most real, but yet which require a teacher to show us their existence or their fulness; this one tells us of the Teacher herself, who comes before us presenting her credentials, and demanding to be received and heard as the ambassador of God. Refuse to admit this Article, and you have no real faith in any other. Your belief in God is no longer supernatural: it becomes uncertain, vague, undefined, and unpractical; for it is the Church that tells you of the lessons which even this most fundamental of all truths would not otherwise adequately convey to you. The great mystery of the Incarnation, with all its realities and its consequences, has been the

theme of her constant teaching, and the occasion of her many contests and victories, and it is through this teacher that the doctrine has been propagated throughout the world. The Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and His Procession from the Father and the Son as one of the operations of the ever-Blessed Trinity, has been strenuously vindicated by her; and most gladly has she been true and loyal to her Spouse, for the Holy Spirit has been given to her, ever dwells with her, and the union is to last for ever. Side by side they stand in the Creed, for they have been joined together, and can never be put asunder. All the other Articles which follow after this one in the Creed are realized through the working of the Church. The Communion of Saints is found in her pale; the Forgiveness of Sins is obtained through her ministry; and that Everlasting Life which is to follow after the general Resurrection, will be the continued existence of the Church no longer militant, but glorious and Triumphant. If this Article, then, is so important, it behoves us to endeavour well to grasp its meaning, and to see its application. This is what we must now proceed to do with the grace and blessing of God.

I. I have been true to what I now say of the importance of this Article. For you remember that at the very commencement of our course, after defining for you what is that Faith without which it is impossible to please God, I showed you the necessary connexion between Faith and the Church, and urged the essential condition of an infallible authority in the Church in order that Faith may be communicated to us. You are not to suppose that I am now going over the same ground again, in bringing before you the Article of our Creed, in which we profess our faith in the Holy Catholic Church. Then I spoke upon the necessity of a Church; now I have to show the reality of *the* Church. Then I proved to you from our dear Saviour's

design and promise that there is and must be a Church somewhere upon earth which He founded, and destined to exist for ever. Now I am to point out to you where that Church is. Then I had to show to you what the Church had to do; now I shall bring her before you, and let you see that she does her duty, and keeps up her claims. Let me, however, without going into details or proofs which have been already given, bring before you the chief points which I then so much insisted upon.

1. If it is the case that Faith means the same now as it did in the Apostles' times, we must admit that whatever was essential to its nature then, cannot be wanting to it now. Faith then meant believing the truths of God when communicated by an authority which was instituted for that very purpose. This authority was vested in the Church by our dear Saviour; and in order that it might claim the submission of the hearers, and exclude all fear of doubt, the Authority was made infallible, and it was declared to be the very Authority of God Himself. Those who accepted the Authority, accepted it not as the word of man, but as it was indeed the word of God Himself. And this Authority, from its nature and from its duties, was to be perpetual. For if infallible, it never could be lost, inasmuch as infallibility means the impossibility of ever yielding to error; and if it was essential at the first foundation of the Church, it is just as essential at any later period, because Faith is always to come by hearing, and without it God never can be pleased. Hence came the promise, that Christ would remain with the Church for ever to the very end of the world, and that the Spirit of Truth when once given, as It was given on the Day of Pentecost, would never be taken away again.

2. And we saw too that the Church was not only founded, but that it existed as an acting reality and a

teaching authority during the time of the Apostles. It was the pillar and ground of the Truth. The Apostles always insist and prove that their authority is really that of God. The Holy Ghost is with them in their deliberations, and it is in His Name as well as their own that they send out their decrees. When therefore they drew up their short symbol of Faith, they inserted an article which declares the Existence of this Church; and as the Creed is to last for ever, each truth in it is to remain for ever, and so there is ever to be a Holy Catholic Church. It has continued in full vigorous life from that time until now, and it still maintains its energy and activity. The Church has as much to do in teaching now as she had in the Apostles' times, and has to watch over the deposit of Truth, and to propagate the Faith throughout the world. We are bound, therefore, to admit and recognize her existence; and as it is through her, and through her alone, that we can obtain that Faith without which we cannot be saved, it behoves us all, as we desire to please God, and to save our souls, to strive to ascertain where she is to be found, and when once we find her to submit obediently to her teaching.

II. As every Article of the Creed declares to us the existence of some real objective truth, this Article which tells us of the Holy Catholic Church declares a reality also. And as every truth in the Creed is capable of being defined, and to have its exact and distinctive meaning brought before us, so also must we expect to have a definition of this truth, and to have it so presented before us, as to enable us to distinguish the real Church of the Creed, from any false pretending claimant. For the Church has its character and marks clear and distinct, just as human nature or any particular object in creation has. And just as an animal means one thing and a stone another, so does the Church mean something which can be described, so as to enable us to know

it, when it is brought under our notice. It is important to insist upon this, owing to the vague and ill-defined idea of the meaning of the Church held by those who are not members of it, and who know not from a happy experience what the Church really is.

We, my dear Catholic Brethren, have no difficulty in knowing, seeing, and feeling this reality. We are in the Church and of it; it is ours in name and in truth. I ask you what is the Holy Catholic Church, and I touch a chord to which every feeling of your soul is responsive. Indeed, what is it that the Church is not to you? She is God's messenger, His minister and representative. She stands between you and God, for she has been founded for this very purpose, and is to you upon earth the ante-chamber to heaven. Under God, and by His will, she is the author of your Faith, because Faith has come to you by hearing her and by receiving her ministrations. She is the security of your Hope, because your membership with her here below gives you your claim to your reward hereafter. She affords you scope and encouragement for the exercise of Love, because it is she that has taught you the knowledge of that God, whom to know, and to love, and to serve, is the duty which she inculcated upon you in your childhood, and which she is ever impressing with unwearied zeal. Everything that is to make you virtuous here and happy for eternity, is secured for you by her. Prayer, which is so faithfully and abundantly rewarded by God, is ever being offered up by her for you and your wants, and its duty personally upon yourself forms the constant theme of her admonitions to you; the Sacraments, those channels which convey Grace from your Saviour's Fountains to your soul, are administered by her: the prayers and good works of her holy children, which are ever offering a sweet violence to the willing heart of your God, are, by the communion which subsists amongst all the faithful, pleading for you.



Well may we call her, Holy Mother Church! For none upon earth can love us more ardently than she does, or watch over us with more maternal solicitude; sharing all our joys and sorrows; encouraging us when she sees that we are labouring to do what God would have us do, and weeping, as a Mother alone can weep, when we are forgetful of our best and only true interests.

When St. Augustine, with the dutifulness of a child and the wisdom of a doctor, was defending the Church against those who were assuming in his days an authority that was not from her, he enumerated the bonds which kept him so closely attached unto her. "In the Catholic Church," he says, "to say nothing of her most sound wisdom, there are many other things which most justly keep me in her bosom. The agreement of peoples and of nations keeps me there: an authority begun with miracles, nourished with hope, increased with charity, strengthened by antiquity keeps me there: the succession of priests from the chair itself of the Apostle Peter, unto whom the Lord after His Resurrection entrusted His sheep, down to the present Bishop keeps me there. In a word, the very name of Catholic Church keeps me, a name which in the midst of so many heresies this Church alone has retained."\* And the love which this great Saint expressed has been shared by every Saint. The most holy are those who have loved and served her the most faithfully. They thought of the love which Jesus bore the Church, when having founded it, and gifted her with so many powers and privileges, He espoused her to Himself, made the union indissoluble, and held out in the words of the Apostle His connexion with her, as worthy to be imitated by those united by the close tie of marriage, who were to strive to love one another, *even as Christ*

\* Aug. Contr. Ep. Fund.



*also loved the Church.\** Beautiful, then indeed must that reality be in which our dear Saviour saw a spouse worthy of Himself! Beautiful, because of her stainlessness, *having no spot or wrinkle*,† as the Apostle again adds: beautiful, because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who resides within her for ever; beautiful, because of the knowledge of God with which she is replenished; beautiful, because of the Grace of God which is ever upon her; beautiful, because of her army of Saints, of Apostles, Doctors, Martyrs, and Virgins; beautiful, because of her lessons, her sacraments, and her ceremonies, by which she is ever ministering to us, and drawing us unto God! And all this, my dear brethren, is a reality: it is a fact, a truth, a positively existing creation upon earth, which it behoves us to recognise, and which we do recognise and profess, when we say: *I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.*

The question about the existence of the Catholic Church is really reduced to this. When God gave His Revelation to the world; when He sent His Son to redeem and to teach; when He who was thus sent, sent others as He Himself was sent, with a command and an authority to teach, did He leave each private individual to judge for himself, purely, humbly, prayerfully, and sincerely if you will; or did He appoint a body and found a society endowed with gifts, furnished with means, protected with aids, and supported by supernatural influences to act and teach and govern in His name, and to keep all the faithful united in one bond of Faith? Take the first alternative, and where is the Church? Take the second, and you see its necessity, its office, its great and living reality. Those who take the first alternative define the Church in a variety of ways, just according to their own peculiar views: those who accept the second, show where it is, and declare

\* Eph. v. 25.

† Ib. v. 27.

that it can be pointed out as clearly as the noon-day sun. Let me now proceed to give the definition and to state the marks of the Church, and to affirm principles which it will be of importance to bear in mind in the vital question upon which we are now entering.

III. 1. I have already, in speaking upon the authority of the Church, given a definition of the Church, and shewn to you the view presented to us in the Scriptures of this body of the faithful under the government of its pastors. We find an organized body, all the members of which are united together, and all subject to one Head. During the life-time of our dearest Lord, He Himself was both the visible and invisible Head; but when He was to leave the earth and to ascend to His Father, continuing still the invisible Headship of His Church, with which He promised to remain all days even to the end of the world, He left a visible Headship amongst the Apostles, appointing one of them to a Primacy over the rest, in order that by this bond, the unity of the pastors might be secured and preserved against the danger of disruption. The Body was to live for ever, and the Headship consequently to continue for ever also. This will of course be developed and proved as we proceed, but my object now is to give you the view which Catholics universally and uniformly hold of the Church, when we define it to be "the Union of all the Faithful under one Head;" the Head of the Church being Christ Himself, with His visible representative upon earth, the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter.

2. As we maintain that it is essential to be a member of the Church in order to be saved, inasmuch as the Church was founded by our dear Saviour for the very purpose of teaching that Faith which is essential to salvation, we must be ready to point out the *Marks* by which the Church may be known, in order that she may be submitted to, and that such as are desirous to

save their souls may be added to her.\* Upon this point also we have no difficulty whatever, and in the language of the venerable Fathers of Nicæa, we declare that the Church must be One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical. But ask your Protestant ministers to define the Church for you, and to give you a sure means of finding it out, so that you may have a reality to answer to what you profess in words, when you say that you believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and the answer will be evasive and unsatisfactory. They will talk to you about the written word of God, and hold that before you as the one means of finding your way to heaven. Surely, that is not the definition of the words used in the Apostles' Creed: *Holy Catholic Church*. Stand to your point, and ask again, what is meant by these words? You will be advised to read your Bible, and to judge for yourself. And thus the end of all your questioning will be, that you ask the meaning of the Holy Catholic Church, and your answer will be all about the Protestant Bible.

3. In order the more effectually to secure the end I have in view in explaining this important Article of the Creed, and in gaining the adhesion of all to the true meaning which it bears, I will lay down three principles which must be admitted by all who accept the Apostles' Creed as a profession of Christian Faith. First, this Article must have its objective truth, just as every other article of the Creed has, and a truth which is capable of being known, and therefore of being clearly defined. For the whole object of the Creed is to give a short formula of Faith, for the instruction of enquirers and of children, for a test of orthodoxy, and for securing unity. Each Article is a simple affirmation of an explicit truth. And as there is a real positive truth answering to each of those Articles which tells us

\* Acts ii. 47.

of God, of the Persons in the Blessed Trinity, and of the Incarnation and Death of our Lord, so there must be a positive definable truth answering to this one which tells us of the Holy Catholic Church. If there were not such a truth, there is no meaning in having the Article in the Creed. Second; as the Creed was drawn up to be a *perpetual* profession of Faith, and to be admitted in its full integrity even to the end of the world, there must always be a meaning to this Article, and the Catholic Church must be existing now, and must continue to exist for ever. Third; (and this is of great practical importance,) this Article is as liable to objections, and may present as many intellectual difficulties as any other Article. But these objections and difficulties do not disprove its truth, any more than the Existence of God, or the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity are disproved; because the human mind can see difficulties regarding them. There is something of mystery and of the supernatural about the Catholic Church, and it is just for this reason that nature sees a difficulty and starts an objection. I have said that it is very important to bear this in mind; for this principle can at once suggest an answer to those who object to the claims of the Catholic Church. And it will not require much effort of mind to show those who do object, that the logical consequence of their objection would lead to the denial of all the other Articles, and therefore to the most unreasonable scepticism. Whatever the heretic may say against the Catholic Church, the infidel can say as much against the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

Believing, then, that there is such a reality as the Catholic Church, we must try to point out where that Church is to be found. We will commence by examining the Marks which the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed lay down for our guidance. We shall find how each and all of these marks can be brought home

exclusively to the Church in communion with the See of Rome. We shall go also into the question of the Supremacy of that See, and shall find reason to be satisfied with its claims, and to acknowledge with St. Jerome, that the visible Headship there established was instituted by our dear Lord, in order that *by the appointment of one Head all chance of schism should be removed*. We who have known the Church, and have so constantly experienced the blessing of that knowledge, will be glad to see her claims put forward, and her beauty and majesty recognised by those who may not have shared hitherto the privilege which God in His goodness has vouchsafed to us. To those who, claiming a spirit of independence which is inconsistent with Christian Faith, would ask why we are so fond of putting forward the Church, and of sacrificing our own freedom of thought to her guidance and control, and would demand what good can come of such submissiveness, we would say with the Apostle, St. Philip, when a similar question was addressed to him: *Come and see.\** Oh! that they would come and see! for then there would be an end to doubt, and a security for Faith: an end to anxiety, and the surest motive for hope and confidence: an end to seeking after mere earthly satisfaction, and the warmest encouragement to fervour and love. Those who seek with a pure and obedient mind will be rewarded in their search, and will come at last to see a beauty which had before been hidden from their eyes. They will find reason to sing forth their songs of thanksgiving that, however late, they have found an ancient beauty, and by a greater fervour will make amends for a shorter service. *If thou hadst walked in the way of God, thou hadst surely dwelt in peace for ever. Learn where is wisdom, where is strength, where is understanding, that thou mayest know also where is length of days*

\* John i. 46.

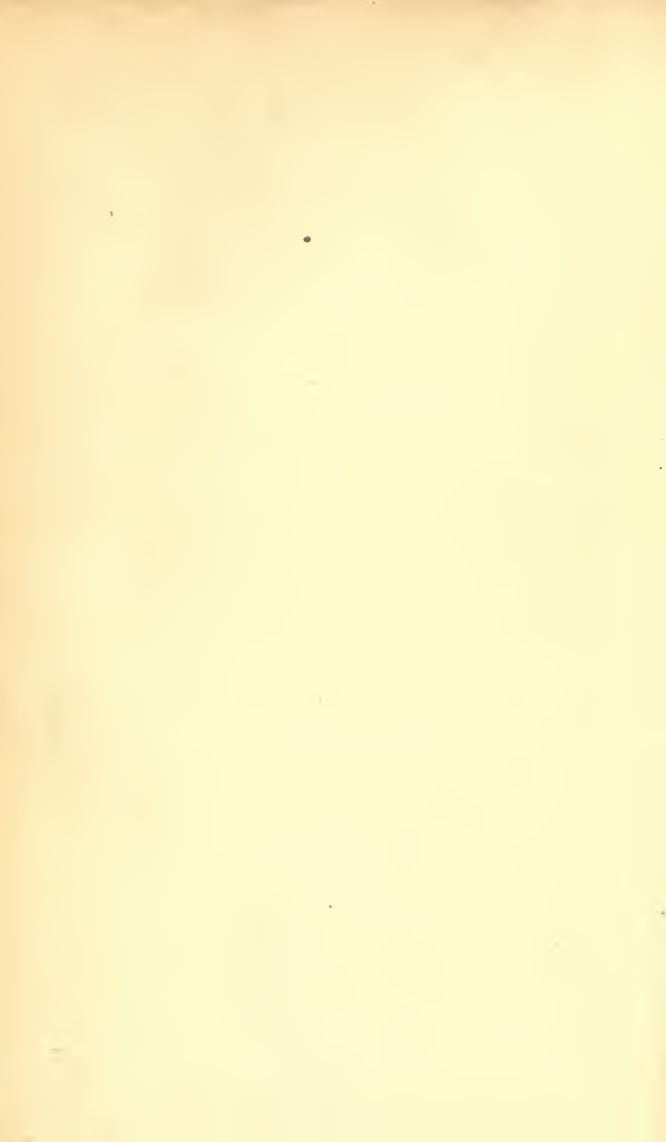
*and life, where is the light of the eyes, and Peace.\* All, then, being brought to love what Jesus loved so warmly, will see the riches placed at their disposal; and being admitted to all the helps and privileges which are attached to a membership of the Church Militant, will find, if they are but faithful to their state, a passage to the Church Triumphant. For so says St. Paul, who will pronounce upon us the blessing which he declared to be the lot of those who had entered the Church : *You are come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the Church of the firstborn, who are written in the heavens, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect.†**

\* Baruch iii. 13.

† Heb. xii. 22.









LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XX.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH—UNITY.

## LECTURE XX

### MARKS OF THE CHURCH—UNITY.

I feel happy, my dear Brethren, that I am brought before the conclusion of the glorious Festival of Easter in which we celebrate the triumph of our dear Lord over death, to speak upon the great privilege of the Church of ever bearing about her the marks which were stamped upon her at the time of her foundation, and which she is ever exhibiting as credentials of her mission, and as proofs of the divinity of her origin. Just as our dearest Saviour, rising from the dead to die now no more, bore about Him the Marks by which He had achieved our Redemption, and pointed to them as evidences that it was Himself who had risen, and not another who was making a false claim upon the belief of the Apostles, so does the Church ever bear about her the Marks which He set upon her, and appeal to them as entitling her to exclusive allegiance and submission upon the part of the faithful.

We have entered upon the consideration of that Article of our Creed, in which we profess our belief in the Holy Catholic Church. I have reminded you of the very great importance of this Article, and consequently of the necessity of well understanding what it means, and why it is inserted as an Article in the Apostles' Creed. The Catholic Church knows how to define herself, and therefore with us there is not the slightest difficulty in knowing what the Church is and where she is to be found. Nor have we any difficulty either in pointing her out to others, and of defending her claim to universal allegiance. I say this at the commencement of these Lectures upon the Church; and when at the end of them I shall have to ask you

to weigh the reasons which I shall have brought before you, I shall make the appeal with confidence; for the cause which I am defending is the cause of God Himself, because it is His Church, and it is the cause of truth which is holy and great, and which therefore must prevail. Let me now again impress upon you the three principles which I urged last Sunday, for they will help towards realizing the end which we must all have in view. First; as the Holy Catholic Church is brought before us as an Article in the Apostles' Creed, it is incumbent upon us to know what it means. Second; as the Apostles' Creed is as true now as when it was first promulgated, and is to continue true for ever, there is and there always will be a reality answering to the name of Catholic Church. Third; this Article is of course open to human objections or to intellectual difficulties, just as the other Articles are. It has its supernatural character, and therefore will be misunderstood by those who can only take a natural view of the truths of Religion.

I. I have already enumerated for you the four great distinctive Marks of the Church enumerated in the Nicene Creed, and in reality implied in the Apostles' Creed. For in this Creed, the words Holy and Catholic are expressed; the fact of its being called *the* Holy Catholic Church declares its unity; and the fact of its being in the Apostles' Creed implies that it is the Church of the Apostles. Thus the Marks, *One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical*, are the distinctive characteristics of the Church in which we profess to believe. Most fitting they are too; and just such as we ought antecedently to expect, even if they were not specified for our easier guidance in search of God's Teacher upon Earth. The fitness of each we will examine, as we investigate the claims which the Church in communion with Rome makes, and challenges exclusively for herself. Our

question to-night is about the first of these Marks, Unity.

1. What is meant by Unity, or by the Church being One? It means, of course, most obviously, that there was not more than one Church founded by Christ; and that if there are two Churches differing in Faith, in Sacraments, in Government and in Head, both are not the Church of Christ. If these two are not in communion with each other, and disclaim connexion with each other, they do not form that which we would or can call *one* body. To be one, there must be the same Faith, the same Sacraments, the same Government, and the same Head. Surely, this cannot be disputed. For if Faith is essential to salvation it must be one, else it is not Faith at all, but only Opinion, which may differ. If the Sacraments are the channels by which God bestows Grace upon us, all who want Grace, as all do, must have recourse to these means for securing it. If the Church is a kingdom and the city of God, it must not be divided against itself, but be under the same control, authority, government and headship. England and France do not form one kingdom, not because each has a distinct geographical position, but because they claim independence of each other, have distinct interests, laws, character, government, and headship. England and Ireland, or even England and India, so far apart from each other, do form an united kingdom, because the elements which constitute unity do exist in these cases. England, though the same place as it is now, was not one in the days of the Heptarchy, when various kings claimed an independence, but it became one when one common king was appointed over the whole country. So is the Church one, when there exists a bond by which all her members are formed and preserved in an unity of belief and government.

2. Certainly our dear Lord willed that His Church

should be One. For His is the true Church, and truth never can contradict itself or be divided against itself. He only founded one Church, and all who were not with Him in that one were against Him. Of the members who form His Church, He says : *They shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.\** Hearing His voice implies the Unity of Faith, for *Faith cometh by hearing ;†* being in one fold and under one Shepherd, implies unity of authority and government. And how dear to His Heart was this wish for perfect unity in His Church is shown by His Prayer, after His last address to His Apostles : *Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given to Me, that they may be one, even as We are.‡* And He begs that this unity may be perpetual, and may even be a Mark and evidence of His Church : *Not for them only do I pray, but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me : that they may be all one, as Thou Father in Me, and I in Thee : that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.§* And see how the idea and wish of the Founder are seized by the Apostle. *Be careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.||* Thus you see the kind of unity insisted on ; namely, that as there is but one God, so there must be an unity of belief, *One Faith* ; and an unity of sacramental administration, *One Baptism*. Observe, I am not yet claiming this unity for our Church, nor am I pretending to make out a kind of Unity just to suit our purpose. I am anxious to give a definition which all must accept who can understand the meaning of words,

\* John x. 16.

† Rom. x. 17.

‡ John xvii. 11.

§ John xx. 21.

|| Eph. iv. 3, 5.

and who can enter into the mind of our dear Saviour when He used them.

II. Now for the important question : Where is this Unity to be found? Is there on earth a Church which claims, and always has insisted on her claim, to be considered exclusively the Church of Christ, and which, in spite of the desire for independence, which perhaps these latter days have fostered, more than any that have preceded them, insists upon submission from all who expect to go to heaven by the way of Faith? I will show to you that there is such a Church, and only one such Church; and therefore if Unity be an essential Mark, she can stand boldly forward and call upon all to acknowledge her title, when she calls aloud, pointing to herself: *This is no other but the house of God and the Gate of Heaven.\** This Church is the Church Catholic and Roman. I feel that I shall best justify this claim, if I show you that this Church is One by applying five different tests, by which her character in this respect may be pronounced upon beyond the possibility of denial.

1. The Church in communion with the See of Rome is one in *theory*. For this is her principle, and one that she is ever defending. She maintains that the Church of Christ is infallible, and is ever identified with our Lord Himself; for it is to His Church that she maintains our dear Lord spoke, when He said: *He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me.†* And she claims for herself also His perpetual guidance, and the indwelling within her of the Spirit of Truth for ever. She never, on any consideration whatever, waives this claim. She declares it aloud, and like Wisdom she *preacheth abroad and uttereth her voice in the streets,‡* and offers

\* Gen. xxviii. 17.

† Luke x. 16.

‡ Prov. i. 20.



peace to all who listen to her. She certainly does not allow her children in matters of Faith to think and judge for themselves, for she can no more dispense with obedience in these matters, than Almighty God can dispense with the dependence of His creatures; inasmuch as she acts and speaks in the name of God and with His sanction. Nothing, of course, could be more contradictory than that she should claim this infallible authority, and yet allow it to be supposed that those can be right who contradict her. Truth never can contradict itself. Contradiction is the evidence of error. It is the test by which its presence is detected and manifested. This then is undoubtedly her theory, that she alone is on earth the infallible teacher of truth, and alone inherits the promise of being secured for ever against the invasion of error. Call her proud and arrogant and presumptuous if you will, for making such a claim. That is not the question now. All that I say is that it is her theory to make it. She has no difficulty in proving that the teaching Church is infallible; but this has been done before, and I cannot be drawn off from the point I am now aiming at, to repeat what I have already discussed and proved at some length.\*

2. The Church Catholic and Roman is also one in *practice*; for beyond all doubt her principle is not an idle and speculative one, but is always acted upon. When once there is a question of Faith, Private Judgment must cease, and absolute submission is demanded. Otherwise it is not Faith, but only opinion; for Faith implies certainty, and the acknowledgment of an existing and positive truth. When the Church pronounces upon an Article, she condemns those who will not accept her judgment; but she is only acting upon the warrant which is given to her. If any one *will not hear*

*the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.\** In her councils, in her solemn decrees, and dogmatical definitions, she always has St. Paul's motto before her. *Be careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.†* And if she anathematizes and excommunicates or cuts off from her connexion those who deliberately deny what she declares to be of Faith, she is but carrying out her principle of maintaining Unity, otherwise it never would be preserved, if those who contradicted her were still nourished as her children. St. Paul did not hesitate to declare anathema any who would preach contrary to what he taught;‡ and the Church in her watchfulness over the deposit of the Faith does the same. Even if it be the question of the separation of a whole kingdom from her union, she weeps but she acts; for it is better for her to have fewer members who are all in the one fold, than to have a larger flock which strays from the shepherd.

3. This Church is also one in *History*. For she has her history, just as any kingdom has. As there is a history of England or of France, showing the identity of the kingdom under various changes and influences, so there is a history of the Church, in which are recorded the various events which have attended her from the time of her foundation, through her progress up to the present day. Her unbroken dynasty, her increase in dominion through the world, her zeal in spreading the Faith, her courage in defending the rights with which she has been divinely invested, her battles and victories, and the various vicissitudes which have marked her career, the heroes and champions whom she has produced in every age from the Apostles till our own times, the laws which she has pro-

\* Matt. xviii. 17.

† Eph. iv. 3.

‡ Gal. i. 8, 9.



mulgated, the evils which she has corrected and repressed, the treasons which have been planned against her, the constant repetition in her own case of the events which marked the Life and Passion of her Founder, these are the subject-matter of her history, and are recorded century after century in the pages of her annals. These prove her to have been all along one and the same Church, they establish her identity, and show her claim to Unity. For her history shows that she has always had the same form of government in the Chief of the Church, the same dependence upon him in the pastors of each country, the same system of laws devised and sanctioned by the same plan and process, and the same means of defence against the same sort of enemies who are always assailing her. In a word, it is enough to say that she is the great champion of Tradition, and History is but the written record of Tradition.

4. The Catholic Church is one in Fact. For the Church is not an abstract idea: it is a reality whose presence is known and recognised, and whose influence is seen and felt all through the world. She is found in every nation, and is everywhere the same. Travel where you will, you find her with the same claims and the same features. The same source of authority is admitted, the same duty of obedience acknowledged; the same Articles of Faith admitted; the same sacraments administered and received. Every Bishop in every nation has as a fact received his appointment from the same central power; and every decree of Faith is received without demur, in the remotest as in the nearest kingdoms. Strangers in Religion who come into our churches in this country will misunderstand our services; Catholics are never strangers to each other in their churches, and we understand the Ritual of the Holy Sacrifice as perfectly in a foreign land as in our own parish church. Whence does this

fact of Unity arise, if it be not from God? For nations are very jealous of their nationality: they are not easily influenced, and certainly do not give up their independence in other matters, at the bidding of aliens; yet as a fact, every nation admits the one centre, and bows down to it in a submission which is paid to God, when it is paid to His representative the Church.

5. In confirmation of this fact we must cite our last evidence in support of Unity in the Church of Rome, and this is found in the acknowledgment of our adversaries, and even in the very reproaches and accusations which they bring against us. Are we not repeatedly taunted at home with evils that are said to occur abroad? If it is the case that there are superstitious practices observed in foreign countries, why is it thrown in our teeth here, except that it is admitted that we are one and the same, as we are, with the Catholics abroad? Why are the terms Roman, Romish, or Papist predicated of us, except that it is an admission on the part of those who use these terms abusively against us, that we have a centre in Rome, and that our chief authority is the Pope? Why in their controversies with us do they ransack decrees of Councils held in remote ages, and in distant countries, except on the principle that they know we are identified with the Catholic Church of every age and of every nation? If a miraculous manifestation is said to be made in a village in a Catholic country, or miraculous events are recorded in lives of saints who lived long ago and far away, such facts are derisively alleged against us, and we are asked to explain them or disown them, as if it were some event that had occurred amongst our own friends and kinsmen. I say nothing more about them at present; but all that I am saying is that the spirit which starts such objections admits our unity, or else their objection is unreasonable even in its motive.

I don't wish to develop these ideas more than my

argument requires. But I feel that I have said enough to prove that the Catholic Church can with reason and unanswerably point to these five tests, and that in the application of all them, she is shown to have the Mark of Unity.

III. Having shown how the Catholic Church stands the test of Unity, it is incumbent upon me to show her exclusive claim, and consequently to point out how impossible it is for others to establish a title to this Mark. The nature of my argument, and the circumstances of time and place, and I would add of responsibility, justify me in attending only to any claim which might be put forward by those in this country who refuse submission to the Church of Rome. However odious comparisons are, we must not shrink from making the comparison here, because it is a question which so deeply concerns us all, and upon which our very Faith, and consequently our salvation depends. Is the principle and theory of Protestantism one of Unity? Is its practice such? The history of its origin and developments? What is the Fact, and what do others say of it?

1. In *theory* and principle it disclaims infallibility for itself, and acknowledges that in Faith it may err; therefore it has no principle of stability, of security, or of Unity. The twentieth and twenty-first of the Thirty-nine Articles declare the possibility of error in the Church's judgments on controversies in Faith, and even the actual error of General Councils. If then there can be no mode whatever of having that security for Unity which the Apostles had, when in their General Council they declared what *seemed good to the Holy Ghost\** and to themselves, where is there anything like an outward standard by which truth and unity are to be tested and defended? Surely it can never be pre-

\* Acts xv. 28.

tended that the Sacred Scriptures, read and interpreted by one's own private judgment, supply a theory of Unity. This necessarily presupposes the knowledge of the inspiration of Scripture. Where can there be a principle of Unity, if it allows Lutherans to deny the inspiration of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistle of St. James? And moreover the principle affirmed in the Thirty-Nine Articles, that the Church of Christ is made up of National Churches, each of which may err, gives no security against the possibility of the National Church in this country being in error now, or falling into error at some future time. Is not this at once a theory which denies not only infallibility, but the very principle of Unity?

2. In *practice* Protestantism is always leading to disunion. At the very outset of the Reformation Luther differed from Calvin upon the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Blessed Eucharist, and each regarded it as a vital and essential question. What Protestant is there who believes just because his Church tells him to believe, and thus appeals to his Church as a motive for his Faith? His practice, as well as his principle, is to judge for himself and to make his own judgment to be the last appeal. Let the body of Convocation attempt a decision, is it immediately submitted to by all, or does not the decision uniformly give occasion to protests and disclaimers? Whatever these discussions after an authoritative decision may prove, if they prove the existence of freedom of discussion, the liberty of the subject, and the Englishman's glorious privilege to think and act for himself, all that I say is, that they do not prove that there is a practice of union, and that is all I am wanting at present to prove. If in a family some of the children would try and make their brothers and sisters murmur at every exercise of parental authority, and would maintain that they were better guides

than the parents, such a family would not be held out as a model of domestic union and happiness.

3. In *History*, if Protestantism ever appealed to it, it would read on every page the record of its own dissensions. It rejects tradition on principle, but tradition is history; and therefore, if it be not too profane to say so, we might look upon followers of such a principle as illustrating the saying of the man in the comedy, who stated that he cared not for the praise of history as his family never read it. The history of Protestantism is the history of separation. It began by disuniting itself from the Universal Church; its progress has been marked by a series of internal separations, and by the upgrowing of sects, each justifying itself by the same plea which was alleged in justification of the first severance from the source of authority and union. The History of England since the Reformation is marked by the succession of three dynasties upon the throne, and with each change there has been a change in Church principles,\* affecting most materially the very nature of Faith. Under the Tudors, the Royal Supremacy was absolute in matters of Faith; under the Stuarts, the Church was admitted to have Divine Authority; and under the last dynasty was introduced what prevails now, the appeal from the Church to one's own private judgment. Thus the testimony of History destroys all possible claim to unity on the part of the Established Church in England.

4. And what is the evidence of that stubborn reality, *Fact*? Open your eyes and see whether the Church of England is united with all the National Churches throughout the world. Is she united with them in Faith, in Sacraments, in discipline, and in government? Certainly she is not in communion with the Church of Rome, but the Church of Rome is in communion with

\* Wilberforce's Principles of Church Authority, chap. xv.



Churches in every kingdom under the sun. Are recent decisions which have been given in England upon Baptismal Regeneration, on the duration of the future punishment of the wicked, on the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, admitted or cared for in the continental churches? And is this Church in England united in itself? Is there no distinction, in Faith even, between High Church and Low Church; or else why does the latter accuse the former of Romish doctrines, and the former accuse the latter of holding no doctrines at all? Do all the clergy of the Establishment teach and practise precisely the same upon the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, upon the power of the priesthood, and upon the absolution of the penitent by the ministry of the Church? And when these decisions, upon which we have said that continental Churches do not trouble themselves, have emanated, are they received with equal submission, even at home, by all the members of the Church? What is the *Fact*? And yet these are questions of Faith, and Faith is necessary to salvation; and so they are vital questions which concern the soul in its prospects for eternity. Listen to an important consideration. What would naturally help towards union in the Protestant Church, namely nationality and a limitation in place, gives it no security; and what would naturally be an obstacle to Unity in the Catholic Church, namely being of every nation, is no prejudice to Unity. For Unity requires something more than nature to secure it, and this supernatural gift is found in the Church of all nations, which is the Church of Rome; but it is wanting in that Establishment which is founded and protected by the law of England.

5. Where is the necessity of the *testimony of adversaries*, to give to her what she does not give to herself? And who are her adversaries, the ones whom she declares as her adversaries, against whom she directs all her power, against whom she legislates,

whose influence she labours so assiduously to control? We are made the objects of her attack, and the very name she gives us in reproach for our principle of union with a central Church, is a sign that she disclaims all union with us, and that she must remain in opposition as long as we remain fixed to the Centre of Unity. All that we can say is what St. Augustine used to say to the separatists of his time. "If yours is the Church of Christ, ours is not. For whichever it is, it is but one."

Now, my dear Brethren, we have to come to a most important conclusion. We want to know which is the true Church of Christ. It is agreed that it must have a mark of Unity, and that by the presence of that Mark it is to be recognised. One possesses it: another disputing the claim of the possessor, has not the requisite Mark. Suppose the case were put to one of those Zulu Indians, whose calculations are said to have driven all his Christianity out of the Protestant Bishop who went over to evangelize them, how would he decide if he were asked to pronounce? Two rival Christians would ask him upon which side was to be found the probability of truth. They are willing to abide by one test, and each admits that the Church must show that it possesses Unity. The Catholic would state his case, and show how Unity has ever prevailed and does prevail amongst his brethren. The Protestant would admit that he wished he had it, but has not. Would that Indian require the wisdom of a second Daniel in his judgment, when in the language of common sense, he would say: Let that Church be admitted as the true Christian one, which shows that it alone possesses the Mark which you both agree to be essential.

When upon one occasion the wisest of kings was sitting in judgment, two rival mothers came before him to claim a child. Each declared herself the mother,

and appealed by the tears and anguish outwardly expressive of a mother's sorrow. How was he to pronounce? There was a deeper instinct to appeal to, and that must be evoked. Let the child be cut in two: was the sentence which was to decide the rightful claim. She that was the real mother begged for the life of the child, even if it were to be taken from herself. The false claimant insisted upon the division, and thus proved her falsehood. For the language of nature identified division with death. So says the lover of the true Church. Preserve Unity, for such is Life



LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXI.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH.—HOLINESS.



## LECTURE XXI.

### MARKS OF THE CHURCH—HOLINESS.

I am speaking to you upon the Marks which distinguish the true Church of Christ. She must be One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The most important Mark of the Church to which I directed your attention last Sunday, that of Unity, ought indeed to suffice at once to decide between rival claims to be considered the Church of Christ. For unity and consistency are always evidences of truth; contradiction and variation in its utterances is a criterion of error. If there are two Churches, each asserting its title to be considered the true Church: if one of these can show that in every age and in every country, it remains fixed and unchangeable in its teaching, and if the other can show no such sign of consistency, but on the contrary is perpetually manifesting disunion and change, this latter must at once yield to the former in the claim of Unity, and consequently of Truth also. I endeavoured in five different ways to bring before you clear evidence of the existence of Unity in the Church of Rome; and by these five same ways I proved, as I would fearlessly assert, beyond the possibility of doubt, that Unity is not a Mark of the Church established by law in this country. We saw that the Church of Rome claims Unity by her very theory and principle of infallibility: she preserves it by her practice: she demonstrates it in her history: she everywhere manifests it as a living fact; and she is allowed to possess it by the very taunts and objections of her adversaries. But in Protestan-

tism, Unity does not and cannot exist. Her theory and first principle of Private Judgment and the rejection of authority makes it impossible: the practice amongst her members, of resisting and protesting against any attempt at dogmatical definition, declares its total absence: tradition is rejected by her, and history only tells of her perpetual changes and dissensions; as a fact she is broken up into innumerable sects, and has become a by-word to all that come within her reach; and it requires no language of an adversary to give her credit for possessing a Mark which her own children discountenance, and which her friends throw up in the most hopeless despair. This then was our argument. The Church of Christ must be One. Two rivals claim to be the Church of Christ. One shows this Mark of Unity, and therefore makes good this claim. The other does not possess the requisite Mark, and therefore cannot be what she pretends to represent herself. The absence of one Mark is fatal to the claim, for the presence of all is essential. We will now pass on to the consideration of another Mark, that of Holiness, and again weigh the respective claims to this sign of the Church of Christ.

I. Let us try to come to an understanding as to the meaning of Holiness, and as to the necessity of admitting it as a Mark of the Church of Christ. As Unity is an evidence and an accompaniment of Truth, so is Holiness an evidence and an accompaniment of that Love of God for His Church, which ever subsists in the connection between Himself and this creature of His goodness and love. All must admit it, and all must only be too glad to claim and desire it. None would willingly give it up, and say that they are better without it.

1. It is certain that Christ willed that Holiness should be a feature and a distinguishing sign of the Church. For the Church is His Spouse, and ought to

be worthy of such an union with the God of Honness. Hear, then, what the Apostle says: *Christ loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might make it holy, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.\** And of the members of the Church he says, *Christ chose us before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy.†* As he elsewhere says: *He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse to Himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works.‡* His own life was one of Holiness, and if it had always been a command of God given in the Old Law, *Be holy because I am holy,§* the work of Jesus Christ upon earth was to show the Holiness of God, in a form in which we could imitate it and become like unto Himself. Every virtue which can adorn the human character, and which contributes to the formation of Holiness, was manifested in Him, and for a double reason; not only because it was most fitting that every perfection of human goodness should be clustered around Him, in Whom *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporally,||* but because He willed that He should in His own life set an example to His followers, and that they should be holy as He was holy. Men were to know His disciples by their charity, humility, obedience, patience and perseverance in good works; and thus Holiness was to be a Mark of His Church.

2. This fact of a resemblance between the Church and Christ Himself, and the manifestation of that resemblance in the exercise of the same virtues which He practised, will give us an idea of what we mean by holi-

\* Eph. v. 25, 27.

† Eph. i. 4.

‡ Tit. ii. 14.

§ Lev. xi. 44.

|| Col. ii. 9.

ness. It means a freedom from sin, and a perseverance in good.\* Our whole duty consists in avoiding evil, and in doing good; and the more perfectly we can succeed in fulfilling this duty, the more holy shall we be. This is evident to the instinct of a Christian. It was declared by the father of the Baptist in his prophetic canticle, that the office of those upon whom Salvation had just then dawned was to serve God *in holiness and justice all our days.*† The mission of our dearest Saviour was to destroy sin, and to establish the reign of Grace; that of His Church is and ought to be to continue His work, and thus to be ever labouring at propagating Holiness amongst her children. And as Christ is with her in her labours, she will not fail; and thus by her teaching, by her ministry, and by the lives of her children, she ought to be able to manifest that she has the sign of the presence and blessing of God upon her, by the evidence of Holiness. Who can deny this, or say that it is not desirable? Who is there that would not claim it, and hold it out when the claim is made good, as a triumphant proof that, as God alone can make us holy, He must be with that Church which secures so great an end. We may, then, take now for granted, that a Church which teaches a doctrine that contributes to Holiness of life, which provides the safe means of attaining to that Holiness, and which actually has succeeded and ever is succeeding in making her children Holy, does establish her title to the mark of Holiness. And if, on the other hand, a society does not teach a Holy doctrine, does not supply the requisite means of Holiness, and does not and cannot succeed in making its members Holy, such a society cannot establish the Mark, which it would be pretending to claim. This then is the state of the question which we are to

\* S. Thom. 2, 2, q.<sup>a</sup> 81, a. 8.

† Luke i. 75.

investigate. The Church of Rome maintains that she teaches Holiness, that she provides the means of securing it, and that she can show it in its reality. She maintains, too, that she alone can do all this, and that if you wish to be Holy you must submit to her guidance and teaching.

II. The Catholic Church, then, claims, and claims exclusively, the Mark of Holiness; and how hard soever it may appear to those who are not members of her, to hear it declared to them, that Holiness cannot be attained amongst them, let them hear me out; and I believe they will see, that if I urge the arguments as strongly and as effectively as I can, it is through love for themselves that I do it, in order that they may be drawn into the bosom of the Church, and thus attain to that Holiness which must precede their future happiness and glory. If it were a human advantage we were seeking, or were defending what was but an ornament and not an essential of the Church, we might shrink from an investigation which might cause feelings which we would not willingly provoke; but it is the cause of truth and of the Church of Christ which we have at heart, and we must take up the work through love for those souls whose interests are at stake. The grounds upon which we claim Holiness, and upon which we stand in our challenge against others, are these three: the theory of Holiness in the teaching of the Catholic Church; the practice of Holiness in the working of the Church; and the reality of Holiness in the success of the Church.

1. When the Catholic Church urges the fact that she teaches Holiness, she begs those who would investigate this claim, to remember how consistent she is in maintaining her right to be a teaching Church. Faith comes through her teaching, and Holiness also. It is for this purpose that she has received her commission, and has been appointed God's representative upon earth.

She stands forward boldly in this capacity, and in the very words of our dear Saviour, she says, *Which of you can charge Me with sin ?\** He was misrepresented, and persecuted, and called a blasphemer, and a seducer, and a false prophet ; but never could a proof be given of such imputations, and so He stood His ground and appealed to His lessons and His works in evidence of His innocence. The teaching of the Catholic Church is systematized, and every point is put forward by her in her manuals of doctrine which she prepares for her children, and in the courses of instruction which she is unceasingly giving from her pulpits. The first lesson in her simplest catechism includes the whole of her teaching ; for she there reminds us that our whole duty consists in knowing, loving, and serving God. This she expands in her *dogmatical* teaching when she tells us what we are to know, and in her *moral* teaching, when she shows us how we are to serve God ; the Love of God being the connection, as it were, between the two, as it is the centre, and soul, and motive of faith ; for it is, as we have elsewhere shown, the clue to all the mysteries which we have to know and believe, and the source of that active obedience which is paid by the good Christian to the commandments of God. You will find her ever zealous in inculcating the necessity of good works for salvation, for she is always reminding her children that they are to be judged by their works, as the Apostle so often urges,† and as our dearest Lord forewarns when He describes the judgment of the last day.‡ But these works are the proof of Holiness ; for we have already given St. Paul's description of the chosen ones of God, when he calls them *a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works*. She always urges the fact tha.

John, viii. 46.

† Rom. ii. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 13.

‡ Matt. xxv. 35.



Christianity is a law, the new law, to which the followers of our Lord are for ever subject; that they must watch over themselves, examine themselves according to the commandments of the law, and never think that they can be free from its constant though sweet and gentle pressure. It is a yoke and a burden, though sweet and light. And the constant exercise of humble and obedient childlike submissiveness to the teaching Church, which is the very soul of Catholic life, is the practical acknowledgment of this yoke, which our dear Saviour has bidden us to take upon ourselves if we would follow Him.

2. The Catholic Church helps her children to attain to holiness. She not only points out clearly what they must do to be holy, but enables them to do their duty, and shows them how to be holy. Her beautiful Sacramental system contains what we might call the appliances for ensuring Holiness; for it is here that she removes sin, preserves us from it, and increases our progress and secures means for perseverance in virtue. I know that this sounds like a mystery, and is perhaps unintelligible to those who are not in the Church; but when a little later we shall describe this beautiful and admirable system devised by our dearest Lord, and ever faithfully adopted in the Church, what is now strange, will be then, I trust, seen in all its working reality and success. Here is the great labour of the ministry of the Church. Here she undoes the influence of sin, and establishes Grace in the souls of her children. Here it is that Magdalene may come, and find her chance of throwing herself in confidence, if still in sorrow, at the feet where she can hear words summoning her to go in peace, and giving an assurance that many sins have been forgiven because she has loved much. Here, too, can the beloved Evangelist ever repeat his privilege of reposing upon that Breast, where he can spend himself in aspirations of union and love. For the two

Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist are being constantly administered, and are ever at the daily service of those who may want the one as a remedy, the other as a preservative in case of sin, and both of them most successful and encouraging helps towards Holiness of life. The life of a faithful frequenter of the Sacraments is one of self-study, of caution, of humility, and of desire for a more intimate union with God! Is not this a help towards the realization of Holiness? And again, the ascetical system, which is scientifically drawn up and is in daily practice in the Church, is always helping towards even a high degree of Holiness. For in the Catholic Church are ever to be found thousands upon thousands who are being encouraged and helped in the observance, not of the precepts only, but of the counsels of the Gospel, and are endeavouring to walk in the footsteps of Him, who said that He came to teach by example, and in the footsteps of the Apostles who followed that example. Within her pale it can always be seen that the Evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience are not confined to the Apostolical times; but that the Church is helping their observance in every age, though by that fact she exposes herself to the abuse and misrepresentations of those of whom St. Paul says, that the *sensual man cannot understand the things that are of the Spirit of God*.\* And in her instructions upon Prayer, in her spiritual exercises, and in her devotional system, the same end is always being kept in view, the sanctification of the soul, and that possession of God here below by love, as a prelude to His possession in the beatific vision hereafter.

3. And a great proof of the Holiness of the Church, to which we may point fearlessly, as having illustrated her in every age, and is illustrating her even now, is the fact of her success. She does make Saints; and every

Saint that has ever been formed for heaven, and that is in possession of it now, has been made through her and through her alone. I do not pretend that she succeeds with all her children, for she does not, and this is not necessary for establishing her mark of sanctity; for in her case, as in that of our dear Lord the Saint of Saints, many are called, but only a few obey the call to Holiness. But those that are made Saints, are made by her; and all her children would be Saints, if they would only entrust themselves completely to her skilful handling, and would be followers of her as she is of Christ. She makes Saints, and she recognizes them: for you know how we are taunted with our love for the Saints, and reproved for the fellowship which in prayer we keep up with them. In every age from the Apostles down to the present time, the Church has shown her beauty in the lives of her Saints. St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Irenæus and St. Clement, St. Gregory and St. Augustine, St. Benedict, St. Francis and St. Dominic, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Francis of Sales, St. Ignatius and St. Alphonsus Liguori, are all ours. Illustrating different periods or different spheres of labour and usefulness in the Church, they are all equally ours: their names are "familiar as household words," and their character and actions are not only recorded in the annals of the Church, but are being constantly brought before us for an encouragement, that we may do what other children of our own Church have done before us. These are names of which Christianity may well be proud, but they are all the works and the result of the success of the Catholic Church. Others too there are, who have loved to meditate upon the example of the Virgin-Mother of our dearest Lord, and have emulated, though so distantly, her humility and love. St. Agnes, St. Clare, St. Gertrude, and St. Teresa are names expressing realities which have been repeated in thousands of

instances, and are being illustrated even now in those devoted daughters of the Church, who give up all things in order to follow Christ, and who, either in a life of prayer, or in deeds of charity to the poor, the ignorant, and the suffering, sanctify their souls and shed blessings around them. No wonder that the world which was an enemy to our Lord is an enemy to them! But how little do they heed the world's censure and criticism, since they have voluntarily abandoned it, and have learnt to look upon all things as dirt, if they could only gain Christ!\* This may sound strange and superstitious to those who are not in the Church; for it is one of the lessons of the Cross, and the Cross has always so sounded to the world. But to those who are in the Church, and who know and see these things, the Holiness of the Church, manifested in the Saints and Religious Orders, is a matter of experience which they can no more fail to see, than they can fail to see the progress of commerce and civilization of which our country so proudly boasts.

What I say then, my dear Brethren, is this. And I can say it without the least fear of giving offence to those who are not Catholics, for I say it in a spirit of devotedness and loyalty to my own mother the Church, that we who know the Catholic Church and have experienced her teaching, have always found her uniformly, perseveringly, and affectionately inculcating lessons of Holiness. She claims us as her children when she makes us holy at our Baptism, and she never relinquishes her claim, but is always showing that in her teaching and her ministry, she is labouring to make us persevere in that Holiness, and to recover it if we have the misfortune of forfeiting it by sin. If we do good, it is because of the helps which she affords us; if we do evil, it is because we turn away from and

\* Phil. iii. 8.

forget her guidance and warning. We owe all to her, as she is God's minister and representative, and therefore it is in a feeling of gratitude and of filial devotion, that we maintain her claim to the Mark of Holiness.

III. I have said, my dear Brethren, that the Catholic Church of Rome has the Mark of Holiness; but I have said something more, namely, that she alone possesses this Mark. I have, therefore, now to prove that her rival in this country, the Protestant Established Church of England, has no claim to Holiness. Let me explain myself, for I am above all things anxious in instituting our comparison, to wound no feelings; otherwise I should even be untrue to my own cause, and should have little chance of persuading those whom I should at once raise up in strong prejudice against me. If I say that in Protestantism, Holiness is impossible both in theory and in fact, I know I state what is a hard saying. But, in order that I may diminish the asperity of the truth, for truth oftentimes sounds harshly, let me explain myself. I do not mean to say that amongst those who are separated from us, there are none that are good and holy. I believe there are many such; and I would even add, that many of them are by their good and irreproachable lives a lesson and a rebuke to Catholics; but yet what I am bound to say, and what I feel that I can prove is this, that it is not Protestantism that makes them good, but that they are good and holy in spite of it. And here I act upon a solid maxim of St. Augustine, that there is no error which has not about it a certain amount or appearance of truth. If Protestantism then can show good and holy persons, it is because of the truths which it still retains, and even because the real principle of Protestantism is in all these cases practically rejected. For the doctrines of Protestantism may be divided into two classes, those in which she agrees with the Catholic Church, and those in which she differs. The former may save, and will

save, if faithfully followed: the latter will bring ruin and reprobation, if consistently carried out. If this is a delicate subject to speak upon (and I feel that it is the most difficult of all to treat without danger of offence) yet the sake of God and the sake of souls compel me to speak, and to ask for a quiet and patient hearing. There seems even to be a providential admission on the part of the Protestant Church, that they do not claim Holiness; for in the version of the Nicene Creed as it appears in their Book of Common Prayer, the word HOLY has dropped out. It appears in the Apostles' Creed, and in the genuine versions of the Nicene Creed, as used in the Catholic Church; but, as if it were to show what was the development of Faith in those who *diminish truths*, it does not appear in the Protestant version. Is it that they give it up? They well might do so; for the distinctive doctrines of Protestantism, as I shall show, do not teach Holiness, nor does Protestantism help towards it, nor has it succeeded in making Saints.

1. Protestantism does not teach Holiness. In practice it rejects teaching altogether, for it claims no divine right to teach with the infallible authority of God. And when it pretends to teach against the Catholic Church, what does it teach? The rejection of those very truths and practices which will make us Saints. Our dear Lord and His Apostles declare to us the necessity of works for salvation. We must keep the Commandments: we shall be judged by our works, which our Lord will enumerate when He comes to judge the world; and our works will follow us. In the performance of these works it is that Holiness consists. Yet the eleventh of the Thirty-nine Articles declares, that it is very comforting to believe that we can be saved without the very works by which we are to be judged. Lutheranism and Calvinism, which are the two constitutive elements of Anglicanism, both reject



in theory the necessity of this all-important evidence, which is one day to be adduced either in our favour or against us. Have Protestants, who have been taught to admire Luther and Calvin, ever been taught to ponder upon their principles and their consequences? To show how thoroughly he rejected good works, Luther says: "Have faith, and sin stoutly." "We must sin whilst we are here. Let us acknowledge the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world, and sin can never hurt us, though we fall a thousand times a day into the grossest sins." And the doctrine of Calvin, that man is driven fatally to sin by God, makes all effort at good to be unavailing. A conviction of one's own justification is with the followers of this leader the prelude to salvation; and the Pharisee, in their parable, becomes exalted far above the humble and penitent Publican. How can such teachers understand the declaration of our dearest Lord upon the judgment which He will pronounce upon our works at the last day, or the words of the Apostle that we shall be rewarded according to our works, or the Scripture admonitions to Holiness, and to make our calling and election sure, by labouring in those very things by which we are to be judged? Here is what such men do, who have diminished Catholic truths. They make Faith impossible, because they take away its motive, and identify it with what we call Presumption and Self-sufficiency; and they make good works unnecessary, and say that it is comforting to believe that we can be saved without them. Where is Holiness in such teaching as this?

2. Protestantism does not help towards the attainment of Holiness. Who has ever heard of its lessons in Prayer and Spirituality? Where are its devotions, and its encouragements? Directly a man aims at asceticism, and would endeavour to introduce into such an ungenial climate the observance of the Evangelical

counsels, he is disowned and accused of being one of us, on the tacit admission that it is only amongst us that such an imitation of Apostolical Sanctity can be attained or attempted. Where amongst them can be found throughout life the constant application of Sacraments, as helps towards Holiness? What could poor Magdalene do in such a repelling system? There are no feet for her to throw herself at, no voice to say: Go in peace. The only truth that is realized of her is, that she finds that her Jesus is gone, and she knows not where they have placed Him. They have destroyed the whole sanctifying system of the Sacraments, and if they pretend to give the Sacred Scriptures as a help towards Holiness, they must admit that they have received those from us, for the only knowledge they have of their inspiration is through us; and even here they strip them of their great reality, by depriving the Church which has given us the Scripture, of the right of telling us its meaning and application. They give it as a rule which is impossible for the bulk of the members of the Church, and which the favourites of heaven, children and the poor, can never apply nor make use of.

3. And what has been the success of Protestantism in making Saints? The very name is not recognized; and the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, though still retained by them in the Apostles' Creed as an evidence against them, is practically rejected as far as concerns *the Spirits of the just made perfect*.\* Outward respectability is the great standard of perfection, and this seems to follow as a logical consequence of their rejection of the Supernatural. For men will aim at goodness of some kind, and when all real encouragement is withdrawn towards the supernatural life, there is no higher good to aim at than that which is natural.

\* Heb. xii. 22.



How rich was the Catholic Church in Saints at the time of that overthrow of Religion, which is called the Reformation! Just as if it were a dispensation of kind Providence to hold out as a contrast against its promoters, the glorious sanctity of St. Ignatius, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Philip Neri, St. Thomas of Villanova, and St. Francis of Sales! What were the holy men connected with the Reformation? In England we have the statement of a Protestant historian,\* that it was commenced by a king who was the murderer of his wives, supported by a statesman who was the murderer of his brother, and finally established by a queen who was the murderer of her guest. And in Germany, where the personal influence of Luther and Calvin was so great, we have their own evidence as to the result. Luther said of Wittemberg, their favourite place, their new Jerusalem: "Since our preaching the world has become worse. Men in town and country, nobles and poor, and men of all estates are given up to avarice and debauchery." And Calvin's evidence is, that of a hundred evangelicals, hardly one had become such, except to give way the more easily to his passions.

My dear Brethren, I must break off abruptly from this theme. I speak in a holy place, on a holy subject, and to defend a holy cause, and I would not dwell for a moment longer than is absolutely necessary on what might suggest thoughts which are not kindred to my subject. Let me repeat what I have stated, that I believe there are many in the Protestant Church who are good, and who desire to love and to serve God fervently and faithfully. But it is because of the Catholic truths which they still maintain, and because of the baptismal Grace which has not been forfeited by wilful sin, or by a conscious rejection of any proposed

\* Lord Macaulay

truth of the Church. This then is the case. Hear it everybody, for it is important for all to know it. If a Catholic becomes reprobate, it is because he goes against some special Catholic principle, which ought to have made him holy and to have saved him. If a Protestant becomes holy, it is because in spite of Protestantism, he has been led by some truth which he still holds, or by a good natural disposition, by the attractiveness of virtue, by the Grace of God, and by the example perhaps of others, to do those things which make him good, and by which he will be judged, though Protestantism would tell him that it is a comfort to think that he can do without them. If a Catholic is lost, it will be because he will have neglected good works, will have given up prayers which have been urged upon him by the Church, will have abandoned the Sacraments or treated them with disrespect, and thus will have neglected the special duties of a Catholic. If a Protestant is saved (as God grant many may be!) it will be because he will have done what a Catholic ought to have done, have stored up for himself a supply of good works against the day of his judgment. In a word, the Catholic is lost because he will have done what the Protestant is taught to do: the Protestant is saved because he practically rejects what he is taught, and does what the Catholic ought to have done.

Contrast the two systems in their sending out a young man into the world to save his soul. The Catholic Church says: "Go, it is God's will. You have your work to do, but God will be with you, and will help you in its fulfilment. I, your Mother the Church, will always be watching over you. Listen to my lessons: receive the Sacraments which I shall always have ready for your use. Pray against temptation, and strengthen yourselves by all the devotions which I shall provide for you. In the Precious Blood of your dear

Lord, in the Sacred Heart, in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar, you will always find help and strength under my guidance. Be watchful, and in the work of self-examination study over your weaknesses and your wants: forget not the duty of self-denial and self-restraint; for though this may cost you some pain, it is by such labour that you are to gain your crown. You can do what others have done before you. I have made saints of them, and I can secure Holiness for you also." This is done by the Church, for she has the duty of teaching and guiding, and those who follow her are sure to be saved. But what would be the consistent language of the other, if it means what it professes? "Go, here is a Book said to be inspired, though I cannot prove the fact. Read it, and judge for yourself. You will have temptations, but I can do nothing to help you under them. Convince yourself that you are to be saved, and then do whatever you like. You need not trouble yourself about doing good, for it is a comfort to know that it can avail you nothing." Which of the two is likely to lead to Holiness? That day will reveal it when the *people acceptable, and a pursuer of good works*, will be ranked upon the right hand, and will hear why they have been saved. The good works will be enumerated, and the sentence passed. *Come ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.\** Thus will the Catholic Church have shown that she understood the meaning of Holiness, when she made it here the prelude to happiness hereafter.

\* Matt. xxv. 34.



LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXII.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH.—CATHOLICITY.



## LECTURE XXII.

### MARKS OF THE CHURCH—CATHOLICITY.

If it was with some difficulty that I had to approach the consideration of the Mark of Holiness, as a distinctive Mark of the Catholic Church,—not that the difficulty consisted in establishing her claim, but that the investigation was one which might wound feelings where we would shrink from giving pain,—it is with the most complete confidence that I enter upon the question which I propose to bring before you this evening, the Catholicity of the Church of Christ. The glorious title, Catholic, is given distinctly in the Creeds, and is ever stamped upon the Church in such visible and striking characters, that both friend and foe acknowledge its presence and bow to the claim. So truly, indeed, has the Church of Rome a title, and (I will say it, as I shall prove it) the exclusive title to the name of Catholic, that the important investigation which we are conducting might at once be brought to a conclusion. And let me remind you of the importance of bringing it to a conclusion, in the case of each individual amongst you. The question of the true Church is the question of the salvation of your soul; for this question involves Faith, and Faith involves everything. Remember what the case is. You profess to believe in a Church which you call Catholic. You declare this in the Apostles' Creed; you declare it in the Nicene Creed; you declare it most expressly and solemnly in the Athanasian Creed, in the very outset

of which you announce: Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. It is before all things necessary: necessary for ourselves: necessary in the decrees and the Will of God: necessary, because Jesus has founded the Catholic Church, and established the Catholic Faith as the prelude and preparation for Heaven. And in order that this Church may be known, she is invested with a character; she bears a name, and her character and name declare who and what she is. As Adam in the dawn of creation named all things, and they went by the names which he gave them, so Jesus at the dawn of Christianity named His Church, and it bears the name which it received then. None can deny it, though some may try to usurp it. Which is the Catholic Church? For the Catholic Church is the Church of Christ, and the Church of the Apostles. This then is our question, and we must try to understand it clearly, and to examine it patiently.

I. As in the case of Unity and Holiness, so in the case of this Mark of Catholicity, let me open the question by stating what is meant by the term Catholic. As Unity is the necessary consequence of the Truth of the Church, and as Holiness results from the character of the Founder of the Church, so does Catholicity follow from the motive of our dear Lord, who will have all men to be saved, and to be brought to a knowledge of that faith which is essential for salvation. We may, in the language and reasoning of the Apostle, briefly state the whole Christian policy to be this. *Christ will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.\** They cannot be saved without Faith;† they cannot receive Faith without being preached to; they cannot be preached to except

• 1 Tim. ii. 4.

† Heb. xi. 6.



by those who are sent to preach :\* therefore preachers must be sent everywhere, otherwise there would be a contradiction in those decrees which emanate from Infinite Wisdom. So the policy of Christianity is that it must be Catholic.

For what we mean by Catholic is Universal : that which exists everywhere, and comprises all places, all truths, and all times. When our dearest Lord founded the Church, and sent His Apostles out upon their mission, He said to them : “ Go, teach all nations, all those truths which I have committed to you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the end of the world,” which was just the same as to say, Go, and be Catholic. Go into every place, teach every truth, and go on doing this for ever. Therefore did the Apostles, well understanding the mind of their Master, when they drew up their symbol of Faith, give the Church the name which expressed her office and her character, when they styled her *Catholic*. And upon the great day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down to confirm the Church, and to take up His perpetual abode within her, He had drawn together men from every nation under the sun, to hear the preaching of the Faith, and to enable the Mark of Catholic to be stamped still more visibly upon her, by their presence and their submission. Thus the reality of the name Catholic belonged to the Church in the earliest days of her existence. What we might truly say is that she received the name Catholic upon the day of her Baptism, when she was sent out to preach to all nations, and she had the name given to her again upon the day of her Confirmation, when, by the voice of St. Peter she preached to and was understood by men of all nations of the earth.

There is another term which must be defined, the

\* Rom. x. 14, 15.

contradictory to Catholic, and that is the term Heretic. For as Schism is opposed to Unity, Heresy is opposed to Catholicity. Generally indeed both go together. All Heresy is Schism, because, as it implies a denial of an Article of Faith, it is as a matter of course against Unity of Faith. All Schism is ~~not~~ necessarily Heresy; for Schism may be an act of outward disobedience to authority, without explicitly denying any doctrine of Faith. Schism is still a grievous sin against Faith, because it offends against authority, which is at the very root of Faith, and as a rule it quickly ends in Heresy. If the word Heretic sounds harshly, it is because it expresses a very undesirable reality. And if nobody would wish to be a Heretic, then let him avoid it by being a Catholic. If he says that he believes in the Holy Catholic Church, let him live up to his profession, and not join a Church which is not Catholic, and therefore Heretical. Mind, I am only defining a term. I am not presuming, nor pronouncing as yet which is Catholic and which is Heretic. All that I say is that a person cannot be both, because the terms contradict each other. The real meaning of Heretic is one who chooses. It is not one who submits to an authority; but who, in matters of Religion, acts upon his own judgment and chooses for himself. St. Paul lays down the rule that a Heretic ought to be avoided, if after one or two admonitions, he shows himself obstinate and perseveres in his heresy.\* For Catholic instinct shrinks from all communion with those who will refuse submission to the Authority which claims universal allegiance.

When we say, I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, we mean, or ought to mean, that we believe not only that there is a Catholic Church, but that we believe all that that Church teaches us, otherwise we are con-

\* Tit. iii. 10.

tradictory, and admit the existence of a reality founded by God, but sever ourselves from connexion with it. How it was admitted in the very earliest ages, and what was the practical meaning of believing in the Catholic Church, is beautifully expressed in a well-known passage of St. Irenæus in the second century, in his treatise against Heresies. "The Church, though spread over the whole world to the earth's boundaries, having received the Faith both from the Apostles and their disciples, guards it sedulously, as though dwelling in one house. And these truths she uniformly holds, as having but one soul, and one and the same heart; and these she proclaims, and teaches, and hands down uniformly, as though she had but one mouth. For though throughout the world languages vary, still the force of the tradition is one and the same. And neither do the Churches founded in Germany, nor those in Spain, in Gaul, in the East, in Egypt, in Africa, nor in the regions in the middle of the earth, believe or deliver a different Faith. But as God's handiwork, the sun, is one and the same throughout the universe, so the preaching of the faith shines everywhere, and enlightens all men that wish to come to the knowledge of the truth."\* Such is the meaning of Catholic, and such is its fitness as a Mark of the Church of Christ. Surely no one can deny that it is a desirable Mark, and just such as would have been impressed upon the Church, and realized in her, by her beneficent and omnipotent Founder.

II. We now approach a question which is very easily solved. Which is the Church which bears the name and the reality of Catholic? Which bears the name of Catholic? Who are the Catholics? I will not answer this question, for every one knows the answer. And who has the reality of Catholic? Would

the voice of the Universe, of foe as well as friend, give to our Church the name of Catholic, if she did not deserve it, if she did not possess the reality? But we will go into the matter; and as some persons who protest against every truth, sometimes protest nominally against this also, we will place the matter beyond all doubt, by applying the same tests as we applied in the case of Unity. And by these tests we will judge of the rival claimants to the name of Catholic, if it could be seriously supposed that there is any rival to our claim.

1. In the first place, then, we maintain that the Church of Rome is Catholic in *theory* and principle. She calls herself Catholic, and in theory she most strictly monopolises the name, and denies the claim of every rival. She maintains her title upon all the three essentials which constitute Catholicity. She exists in every place, she has existed in every age, and she teaches every truth. This she professes, and therefore this is her theory and principle. Her theory is that in whatever country she may find herself, she is independent in matters of Faith of the Government of that country. Her claim is oftentimes misunderstood, and she is interfered with; but yet in the guardianship of the Faith, she maintains her independence even unto suffering and martyrdom. Here in England our name implies our principle. We are not members of any National Church, we bow to no National Supremacy in Religion. In temporal matters we yield to none in sincere and active loyalty; but in matters of Faith our highest authority is not here; but it is in that centre towards which every Catholic in every quarter of the globe looks as we do. Why are we taunted with paying an allegiance, which we don't pay, to "a foreign potentate," but because there is a submission in Faith which we do pay? Our principle is that we must give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,

and to God the things that are God's. But as there are many Cæsars, in those temporal duties we have different centres in different countries; but as there is but one God, the duty to Him is the same everywhere. We are accused of aggressiveness; and our principle is aggressive in the same manner, but in no other, as the Apostles' principles were aggressive. It was a bold aggression of St. Peter to go and fix his see in Rome, when the tyrant Nero was reigning there. But when the Apostles were bidden to *Go and teach all nations*, they were bidden to make that aggression against which the spirit of the world has ever protested. The Church must include all persons, hence she attacks them with her arms of persuasiveness, and tells them that stern truth which the world thinks so hard to hear: *He that believeth not shall be condemned*. This is her theory and principle, and this is Catholic principle.

2. The Church of Rome is Catholic in *practice*, and in *Fact*. Every member makes that noble profession which was made by one of her early bishops, St. Pacian: My name is Christian, and my surname Catholic. What is the practice of this Church in matters of Faith and Discipline? Trace her practice in the Pastors and the people. In the Pastors, most certainly it is the practice for every Bishop of whatever country he may be, to receive his appointment and his jurisdiction from the Holy See of Rome. Why is it that at the present moment there are so many dioceses left vacant in parts of Italy, but because that power which alone can appoint a Bishop, and which has appointed every predecessor in each of the widowed Churches, is fettered in its liberty of action? Through the Bishops, the second order of the Clergy receive their jurisdiction in the exercise of the ministry, and through them the faithful children of the Church are nourished with the Sacraments, and instructed in the Faith. Directly there is

a question of doctrine, what is the practice of this Church? She does what the Apostles did. She calls her Bishops from every quarter of the globe to assemble in a General Council, and to express the mind and send forth the utterance of the Church Catholic. Or each is requested to send his judgment to the Central Authority, in order that the voice which speaks may be like St. Peter's on the day of Pentecost, given forth under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and be understood and accepted by all the peoples of the world. For the sheep in this fold know the voice of their shepherd. This, I have already had occasion to show to you, was the case in that recent decree concerning the Immaculate Conception, which has shown the practice of the Church of Rome in sending forth her definition of truth, and is a living proof of her Catholicity. As a fact also, in her numbers and her distribution throughout the world, this Church shows how really she is Catholic and Universal. She claims and receives the obedience of 250 millions of subjects, and can show that there is not a country in the world in which her existence is not recognized, or where her influence is unfelt. Everywhere she is a reality. She has taught and is teaching all nations. And of her did the Psalmist sing prophetically what our own eyes have been blessed in seeing. *Their voice hath gone forth throughout the whole earth, and their words to the uttermost bounds of the Universe.\**

3. What is the testimony of her *History*? for in speaking upon her Unity, I told you she had her History. Is the History of the Church of Rome the History of a National Church, or is it not the History of the Church of the Universe? Take her History and read it: trace her annals, and what do you learn? There you will read the Ecclesiastical history of every nation, the origin of the Episcopacy in each, and the

\* Ps. xviii.



source from which it emanated. Look to our own country. Who founded the See of Canterbury, and gave it its Primacy over the whole of England? Whence came St. Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, except from that good and watchful Pope St. Gregory the Great, to whom we owe so deep a debt of gratitude for such active and perseverant love? The History of the Popes, of the General Councils, of the conversion of nations, of the Doctors, Theologians, and Saints of the Church, of Heresies and Schisms on the part of individuals or nations who have broken off from her, all combine to declare to the Universe that the Church of Rome is the Church of the Universe, that is to say is the Catholic Church. Or limit your reading of her History, if you will, to the first four centuries, during which our adversaries sometimes pretend to admit a purity and integrity of doctrine in what they call the Primitive Church, and it is impossible not to be struck with the strict parallel existing between the Church as it was then, and as it is now when found in communion with Rome. It certainly is the case that proofs from History are amongst the strongest confirmatory evidence that we adduce, in support of every doctrine which modern Heresy has rejected. Where else, but in the Church of Rome, could the First General Council of Nicæa, find a recurrence possible? Does not a National Church make a General Council to be a contradiction in terms?

4. And if we pass from our own claims, and appeal in behalf of our name of Catholic to the *Testimony of adversaries*, what is the result? They cannot deprive us of a name which they know belongs to us. They try to take it from us in a variety of ways, and they know at the time that they are so trying, therefore they know we have it, even if they say we ought not to have it. If they say that we are Roman Catholics, and that they themselves are real Catholics, does any

one believe them, or do they even believe themselves? Let me give you a test which was given 1500 years ago by St. Cyril, and just after him by St. Augustine. Here is a caution given by St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his Catechetical instructions: "If ever thou art sojourning in any city, enquire not simply where the Lord's house is, (for the sects of the profane also attempt to call their dens, houses of the Lord,) nor merely where is the Church, but where is the *Catholic Church*? For this is the peculiar name of this holy Church, the Mother of us all, the true Spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ."\* And St. Augustine, in a beautiful passage which I have already on a previous occasion cited for you,† after enumerating the links which bound him to the Church, concludes by appealing to her name of Catholic, "a name which in the midst of so many heresies this Church alone has retained ; so that although all heretics would fain have themselves called Catholics, yet to the enquiry of any stranger: Where does the Catholic Church hold its meeting? no heretic would dare to point out his own temple or house." Who can appeal to this test, but ourselves, and who but we, could receive from an adversary even the unwilling testimony that ours is the Catholic Church? If then a stranger on entering our own city, were to point to the church in which we are now assembled and were to ask, to whom does this beautiful church belong, and were answered that it was the Catholic church, would he not at once understand that distinctive name? Or if, in the spirit of St. Cyril and St. Augustine, one of our Catholic brethren wishing to hear Mass were to ask a passer by to point out to him where he could find the Catholic church, would he point to any other but to one in which this Mark of truth was to be found? He could not even point to that glorious Abbey, which once

\* Catech. xviii.

† Vol. ii. p. 8.



had the name of Catholic, because it was founded and built by our Catholic ancestors, but which only stands now as a sepulchre, one of those monuments of which it has been well said, standing sacred to the memory of a Faith and a Love which have passed away.\*

Now, my dear Brethren, here are tests which in any legal matter would be considered decisive. We have the name of Catholic beyond any doubt, and we have it in every quarter of the globe. Not content with alleging our claim to the reality on the universal admission that the Name is ours, we have gone into our proofs and have shown that the Name is not wrongly applied, because we are Catholic in truth as well as in name. The Church of Christ must be Catholic, else it is not the Church of Christ. Ours is Catholic, and so we have done one part in making good our claim. But is there any other Church which can dispute this reality with us, and deprive us of our claim? There is none: there never has been one: there never can or will be one. Wherever a false claimant steps forward, we can at once overthrow his pretension and show his falsity. It is almost a loss of time to attend to any arguments which could be adduced by the Established Church in this kingdom; but as the nature of the case requires that I should touch upon this point, I must not leave it wholly unnoticed.

III. Does the Protestant Church in this kingdom really and truly ever pretend that it alone is the one Holy Catholic Church? What proofs and evidences can it give of such a claim, if it pretended to allege it seriously and sincerely? Has it the name of Catholic? Leaving out a few of its members, who through affectation, or sentiment, or for the sake of appearing consistent, or of disputing our claim, say that they are Catholic, is the Church in this country known as the

Catholic Church, and distinguished at once and recognized by that name? And besides the name, has it the reality of Catholic? Is it not Protestant in name and in truth? Does it not imply a previously existing form of Christianity from which it has separated, and against which it has protested? So that in order to name itself, instead of making the noble profession of St. Pacian, it would have to declare: my name is Separatist, and my surname Protestant. This is not mere antithesis and declamation; for let us look into the question, and apply the tests which the Church of Rome stands so satisfactorily.

1. Is the *theory* and principle of the Established Church a Catholic theory? If so, its theory ought to be that it is the Church of all times, of all nations, and that it teaches all truths. Is it the Church of all times and all nations, and does it pretend to be such? The Act of Royal Supremacy enforced in the reign of Henry VIII., and sworn to ever since by the clergy of the Church of England, states the real theory of this Church. It is but a National Church, the Church of one nation, and therefore not the Church of all nations, or Catholic. This Act declares that the King of England is "the only supreme head on earth, under God, of the Church in England." This Oath, which was imposed on the clergy and others, for the first time, in the year of our Lord 1536, declares that the person who takes it, "shall from *henceforth* utterly renounce the Bishop of Rome and his Authority," implying that up to that time such authority was acknowledged, as it undoubtedly was. It has never been pretended that this Supremacy exists beyond the English dominions, for Acts of Parliament are not made to bind other countries. And so from the year 1536, the English Church has declared itself merely a National Church, and therefore not Catholic. If it is not Catholic in time or place, neither does it pretend, in deciding controversies of Faith, that

its decision is to be accepted beyond the limits of its own dominions. And so even in declaring truths, it does not pretend that the truths have any claim upon the acceptance of those who are not of the Church of England. The declaration prefixed to the Thirty-Nine Articles, simply states that they express "the true doctrine of the *Church of England*;" but when more than two hundred millions of Christians owe these Articles no allegiance, and utterly repudiate them, they cannot pretend to express the true doctrines of the *Catholic Church*.

2. If the theory and principle of the Church of England is not Catholic, but only National, what is its *Practice*, and what does *Fact* tell us? There is no uniform practice observed at home, and certainly its practice has no influence abroad. I said at the commencement that Heresy is the opposite to Catholicity, and that whereas Catholicity implies universal submission to a central teaching authority, Heresy is an eclectic system, allowing all persons a freedom of choice and the exercise of Private Judgment in matters of religion. Thus, Faith degenerates into Opinion, which implies only probability, but not truth. So that in practice, what Protestants believe is not what they know for certain to be a positive existing truth, but only what seems to them to be possible or likely. Such cannot be the nature of Catholic truth. And what is the consequence of such practice? Is the Protestant faith uniform at home? Is it the same in England and in Scotland, in each of which parts of the kingdom a totally different Established Religion prevails, Episcopal in England, and Presbyterian in Scotland? Schism has followed after, and has been punished by Schism; Heresy has rapidly begotten Heresy; and the recent attempts at dogmatical definition on the part of Ecclesiastical Authority in England, have called forth a great deal of unsuccessful special pleading upon the part of

those who try to defend the Church of this Kingdom against the imputations of absolute scepticism. I may seem to be arguing more against the Unity of the Protestant Church than against its Catholicity. But, whatever disproves its Unity, shows the impossibility of its Catholicity. For, what we mean by Catholic, is *the same Faith everywhere*, but if there is no *same Faith* at home, there is none to be spread everywhere, and therefore the absence of Unity is the impossibility of Catholicity.

3. Turn again to *History*, and what is its miserable testimony as to the Catholicity of the Church of England? It tells us that by its foundation, its principles, its supports, and its vain attempts at progress, it is limited to the British dominions, and is there shattered into divisions whose name is Legion; that before the Act of Supremacy it had no existence, and since the Act of Supremacy it has had no inward life or activity. It was paralyzed at its birth, and whatever appearance of vitality it has about it, is only kept up by the outward supports and stimulants of wealth, family influence, penal and other legislative enactments. So far from preaching the faith to all nations, it was not intended for any other but British subjects: and instead of bringing a single nation to the Faith, it has destroyed the principle of Faith at home, and has long since lost all hold upon the affections and dutifulness of the bulk of the people, who always run off from all obedience to it, when they try to satisfy a craving for spiritual food, which never can be satisfied in its cold and withering communion. In fact, the history of the English Church is the history of a National Establishment, and that is the direct contradictory to *Catholic*.

4. And upon this point what says the *testimony of adversaries*? Does any adversary give the Church of England the name, or credit for the character, of Catholic? We know that self-praise is no recommenda-

tion, and as the only ones who ever pretend to attach the name Catholic to the Establishment, are a few of its own members, we can see the value of the epithet when so applied. Their claim is universally denied by all who are not members of their Church, and is practically disowned by most of themselves; and it cannot be a shade beyond the truth to add that whenever even those few exceptional ones hear the name Catholic predicated of any person, they know and feel full well that it is not meant for one of them.

Now, we have said enough to come to a conclusion. It must and ought to be a practical conclusion, for it concerns a matter of the most awful import to every one of us. Christ has founded but one Church upon earth, and that Church must be Catholic. She has been commissioned to teach all nations, and Faith and Salvation cannot be found except through her. So important is this Mark of Catholic, that all the Creeds conspire in putting forth this name in striking prominence. I believe in the Holy *Catholic* Church, is the perpetual profession of those, who as Christians believe in the Apostles' Creed. One, Holy, *Catholic* and Apostolic Church, is the Church described and defended by the venerable Fathers of Nicæa. And with a solemnity which ought to awaken to a sense of its awfulness, the Athanasian Creed inaugurates its profession with this declaration: "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the *Catholic* Faith: which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." The question of the Catholic Church, then, is a question of the salvation of your soul. Where is that Church to be found? for it is worth while to know it, and it must be known. It is a treasure, for the securing of which it would be well and prudent, and even essential to give up everything; for it is giving up what passes away quickly, for that which is to endure for ever. God in

His justice demands, as He has a right to demand, your submission to that Church, as the price of your soul; and in His goodness, He has set a stamp upon that Church, in order that you may know it. If He, having established His Church upon earth, calls you to it, shows it to you, tells you its very name, and proves its real title to that name, but you content yourself with going on in your own way, and refuse His call, what will you answer, when He shall arise in judgment? I sent my teachers, He would say to you, into every quarter of the world, in order that all might know my Church, and through it be brought to that Faith which was essential for pleasing Me. You saw it, and had its knowledge brought home even individually to you. You knew the name Catholic, and you often heard it. The very opposition of the world, which was always opposing Me, brought that name frequently and strikingly before you. You had your free-will, and in its exercise you had a choice between two Churches. One was Catholic, the other not. Upon your choice depended the alternative, whether you were to possess Me or to lose Me for ever. What have you done?—It will be too late, my dear brethren, to make any change upon That Day. It is not too late now.







LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXIII.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH.—APOSTOLICITY.



## LECTURE XXIII.

### MARKS OF THE CHURCH—APOSTOLICITY.

In the very important investigation, in which we are now engaged, into the claims of rival Churches to Marks and characters which each admits as essential, we have come, by the blessing of God, to the last, the fourth Mark, Apostolical. This is a distinct Mark, expressed in the Nicene Creed, and implied as strikingly as if it were expressed, in the Apostles' Creed. For "the Holy Catholic Church" of the Apostles' Creed must needs be the Apostolical Church. Does this Church, then, really exist, and where is it to be found? Where is there upon earth a Church invested with the same power as the Apostles had, and exercising that power under the same circumstances, and with the same steady and uncompromising spirit? Where is that Church venerable in its antiquity, with a genealogy and pedigree honourable beyond all others, claiming and holding the first place in Christian nobility, and standing alone in its premiership amongst all Christian families? Venerable in antiquity, but yet ever new and vigorous and full of life, with its youth perpetually renewed like the eagle's, because ever inhabited by the Spirit of Him, who says: *Behold I make all things new.*\* Are the Apostles dead? Or are they still living, working, ministering, ruling, acting, teaching, and blessing through their successors? To the Apostles it was said by Him who sent them: *Behold I am with*

*you all days, even to the end of the world.\** Is this promise still undergoing its fulfilment, or has the world conquered and brought it to nought? And to the same Apostles the same Founder said: *You are the light of the world: you are the salt of the earth.†* Is the light extinguished, or does it still shine as brightly as ever? Has the salt lost its savour, or does it relish and preserve as effectually as ever? These are questions which it is fitting for us all to ask; and they bear answers which it becomes us all to listen to.

I. Let me state the question, and explain the term Apostolical. Apostolicity, like Catholicity, follows from the motive and act of Jesus Christ in founding His Church. For Christianity, being intended for all times and all places, was to continue the same for ever. It had immutable truths to teach and propagate, and was always in its labours to be assisted by the same helps, directed by the same Spirit, and upheld by the same powerful Presence. As, when Christ said: *Go, teach all nations*, He made His Church Catholic; so when He said: *Behold, I am with you all days*, He made it Apostolical. There can be no doubt about the desirableness of this Mark, and of its being a fitting sign of the Church of Christ. But as it is a Mark and a sign it ought to be noticeable, and to bear about it some reality which can be brought before the mind of an enquirer. What is it, then, that is meant by the Church being Apostolical? The Apostolical Church is that which is the same as the Church of Apostles, and which shows its identity in origin, in doctrine, and in succession of Pastors.

1. The Church must be Apostolical in *Origin*. There is no doubt that the Church was founded by our dear Lord upon the Apostles. They were its first Ministers under Him. They were called by Him,

\* Matt. xxviii. 20.

† Matt. v. 13. 14.

invested with their powers by Him, prepared for their work and sent by Him. An Apostle means a Missioner, one who is sent: as our Lord said: *As the Father hath sent Me, so do I send you.\** St. Paul tells the members of the Church that they are *built upon the foundation of the Apostles.†* And St. John saw the New Jerusalem *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, having twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.‡* Here is the commencement of the Church's history; and now in her later days after her struggles and her progress, we are proud to point to the glory of her origin, and to identify ourselves with that institution which was founded by our dear Saviour, with the express wish and determination that it should continue for ever.

2. The Church must be Apostolical in *Doctrine*. For the nature of the truths of Faith implies their unchangeableness. Christian truths are for all times, and like first principles they are of universal application, and can never cease to have their inward and objective reality. Of the early converts made just after the great event of the day of Pentecost, it is recorded as a proof of their orthodoxy: *they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles.§* And when St. Paul was exhorting in his duty his disciple St. Timothy, whom he had consecrated as a successor in the Apostolical work of teaching, he says to him: *the things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also.||* This precisely describes the Apostolical character of the Christian doctrine. It is taught by an Apostle to one who is to continue his work, and he in his turn is to hand it down to his successor, and so on in every future generation of teachers; so that the doctrine emanating

\* John xx. 21.

† Eph. ii. 20.

‡ Rev. xxi. 2, 14.

§ Acts. ii. 42.

|| 2 Tim. ii. 2.

from an Apostle becomes propagated in every age of the Church's career, that is to say in every age to the consummation of the world.

3. But as an appeal to Apostolicity of doctrine is made, though without the least possibility of standing investigation, by those who have separated from the Church, there is a third requisite which can always be appealed to as a visible and striking proof of a claim to this Mark. The Church must be Apostolical in the *Succession of Pastors*. The Pastors of the Church of Christ are never to be self-constituted ministers. *How shall they teach unless they are sent,\** that is unless they are Apostolical? says St. Paul. This succession must be *uninterrupted*, that is to say it must be traceable up to the very Apostles in an unbroken line; and it must be *public*, that is to say such as can be known, seen, and recognized. For it is a Mark, and therefore must serve to distinguish that of which it is a Mark, from any counterfeit or spurious imitation. This was most clearly the will and design of our dearest Lord. He sent His Apostles just as He Himself was sent by His Father; and as a proof of the efficacy of their ministry when thus sent by Him, He would not convert the world during His own life-time, and by His own labours, but He would do it through them and their successors. Whatever power He had He gave to them, *all power in heaven and on earth*; so they had the power of ordaining those that were to come after them, and the power of transmitting to those ordained the plenitude of power which themselves had received. Thus the same plenitude of power exists now in the Church, and the Pastors who have succeeded through many generations from the Apostles, are even now equal to them in the jurisdiction which is essential for the Ministerial work of the Church. *Apostles, Pastors and Doctors* are still

wanted *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.\**

Rightly ordained ministers receive their powers through those who have ordained them: if those that ordain are simply from man, then the power is but human: if from God, it is divine. But this divine source must be shown, and the only way to show it is to trace it up to those who were immediately appointed by our Blessed Lord. This ought to be done by a Church which claims to be Apostolical, and it ought to be done in a clear and convincing manner.

This Mark of Apostolicity is one which was always appealed to with the greatest confidence by the early Fathers of the Church. And the apologists of the Church, those who stood forward to defend her doctrines and her claims, felt themselves to be upon a rock when they took this line of defence against the heresies which St. Paul says must be in every age. St. Irenæus, a disciple of St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist our patron and protector, transmits this principle which he had received. Enumerating the successors of the Apostles, whose names were within the memory of those whom he was instructing, says: "By this order and succession, that tradition which is in the Church from the Apostles, and the preaching of the truth have come down to us. And this is a most complete evidence, that the living faith is one and the same, which from the Apostles even until now, has been preserved in the Church, and faithfully transmitted."† And Tertullian, writing about the same time, expresses the same instinctive feeling. If any one would dare to claim fellowship with the Apostles, he says: "let them declare the origin of their Churches: let them unroll the list of their Bishops, so running down by succession

\* Eph. iv. 11. 12.

† Adv. Hær. Lib. iii. cap. 3.



from the beginning, that their first Bishop was either an Apostle, or was connected with the Apostles.”\* And if it was a convincing proof, and most naturally so, in those early days, it is and ought to be more convincing in our days. For if it was a proof of truth to have kept up an unbroken succession for two centuries, it is far more convincing, even if it be harder to prove it, to show this same unbroken succession for eighteen centuries.

II. Having thus defined Apostolicity and seen its fitness as a Mark in the Church of Christ, we now come to join issue upon this title, and fearlessly as before we throw down our challenge, and defy any competitor either to overthrow our claim or to establish his own. Comparing ourselves, in pursuit of our argument, with the separatists in this country, we find such a total difference in many most important and practical points, that it comes upon us as a self-evident proposition that we are not both Apostolical. If they are, we are not: if we are, they are not. Which of us is Apostolical? I hope to show to you, beyond the power of denial, that the Church of Rome is Apostolical, and the Church of England is not so. This, I feel, shall do most satisfactorily, if I show that the Church of Rome alone claims the same powers as the Apostles: that she alone exercises the same powers; and that she alone has the same constitution as the Church of the Apostles, kept up from their time till our own.

1. The Church of Rome claims the same powers as the Apostles. This may be looked upon as a bold and proud claim to make in these days of liberty and independence, when freedom of thought is considered as the right of every man, and intellectual progress is asserted as having made us to be so much in advance of our ancestors. Yet with Apostolical liberty we make

this Apostolical claim, and demand in the name of the Church, the same sacrifice of an obedient and submissive spirit in matters of Faith, as was demanded and insisted on by the Apostles. Our Rule of Faith is precisely the same as theirs, and when we repeatedly assert the gift of infallibility as still residing in the Church, we do so, because we go on the principle that the Church is the same now as then, and has now every power which she possessed at the time of her foundation on the Apostles. All power in heaven and on earth was given to them: this spiritual supremacy still remains with the Church. The Church of the Apostles could not err, because it was secured against error as we have repeatedly proved, by a presence and a promise bestowed for this very purpose. The presence still continues, and the promise has not been broken, and cannot be, for it is God's promise. The Apostles who were sent by Jesus Christ, in the same manner as He was sent by His Father, have in exactly the same manner imparted their mission to those whom they sent, and the power attached to that mission is still in full force and reality. The echo of that announcement: *Go, teach all nations*, has not yet died away; but the sound is heard as distinctly now, as on the first day of its solemn and majestic utterance. The Church still thanks God, as St. Paul told the Thessalonians that he did, because her word is accepted, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the word of God. It is still true that those who hear the Church hear God, and those who despise the Church despise Him. And true is it also, that those who will not hear the Church are for their disobedience severed from her communion, and looked upon as heathens and publicans. And all this, because we believe that our dearest Saviour meant what He said, and was determined to realize His Promise when He spoke these words: **BEHOLD I AM WITH YOU ALL DAYS**

EVEN TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE WORLD. Ask the Church, then, why it is that she alone stands up for an authority which is so much opposed to what is called the liberal and independent spirit of the age, and her answer is: I am the Church of the Apostles, and I cannot forfeit a single claim, which I was commanded to make at the time that I was invested with my sacred powers on the day of my origin.

2. And the Church is not idle in her claim, but exercises the same power as in the first days of the preaching of the Gospel. I need not repeat what has been said, when we observed how truly in the case of Unity and Catholicity she carries out the Apostolical principle. You know how often she is accused of opposing liberty of conscience, just because she most watchfully and constantly does oppose infidelity and free-thinking. And every day's experience shows how her practice is constantly bringing down upon her the reproach and opposition of the world. For not only does she do what the Apostles did, but she does it in the same manner, and in spite of the very same opposition of the world, which is just as much opposed to the successors of the Apostles as it was to the Apostles themselves. And whilst others may boast of their fraternisation with the world, and of the little opposition they meet with from the powers of the world, who else but the pastors of the Apostolical Church can say with St. Paul; *I think that God hath set forth us Apostles, the last of men, destined as it were for death.\** The same privilege of suffering and of worldly contradiction, for it is a privilege, attends her now as ever. The same taunts and objections and sharing in the Cross ever fall to her lot as in the days of St. Paul. But, thank God! she is as well able as ever to withstand such opposition, for the spirit of Apostolical For-

titude is ever upon her. Her pastors, her converts, her missionaries, all her faithful children are having convincing proofs brought home to them every day, how true it is of them what was said to the Apostles: *If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.\** Of what Church throughout the world is this verified, except of that which with Apostolical zeal and confidence, exercises the high office entrusted to her of teaching, guiding, and correcting the souls for which she has to answer to God?

3. But the great and public proof of the Apostolicity of the Church of Rome is in her constitution and the succession of her pastors. When our dear Lord founded and formed His Church, He gave it the constitution best suited for its office and work, and determined that that constitution should continue throughout its career for ever. Certainly, when our Blessed Saviour was on earth, He was the Head of His Church, and was totally independent of the temporal governments which were then existing in the different kingdoms of the globe. The Apostles depended upon Him, received their power and jurisdiction from Him, and under Him formed that perfect system which was inaugurated then, and which perseveres even now. For when He was about to return to His Father, He appointed one of the Apostles, St. Peter, (as I shall fully prove to you in our next Lecture,) to take the visible headship of the Church, and built His Church upon that Rock. This, then, was the perfectly constituted form of the Church fixed by our dear Lord. One Head, many Pastors under that Head, and the faithful people nourished and instructed by those Pastors. That Headship now exists upon earth, even after so

\* John xv. 19.

many centuries, as a great and visible reality. It is an acknowledged fact, that the Bishop of Rome is at the present moment the visible and acting Head and chief authority in the Catholic Church. It was the fact in the last century ; in the century before that ; in centuries long past, and in every age up to the time of the Apostles. No origin can be stated for such power and superiority until we come to the time when our dear Saviour singled out St. Peter and said to him ; *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church.* It is the case that all nations of the earth look towards this centre, and acknowledge it to be the source of jurisdiction in the Catholic Church. Nations at war with each other, jealous of each other, determined not to be influenced by each other, unite upon this matter, and look to the same Apostolical centre, through which the succession has been most publicly continued from the days of the first foundation of Christianity. The authority invested in the Head and Pastors of the Church, they know to be quite independent of them ; and however old and venerable may be the dynasty and succession in their own kingdoms they admit that all must yield the palm to that unbroken succession, which in the midst of so many dangers and in spite of such opposition and enmity remains fixed and steady as ever. Observe that what we insist upon is this, that the real test and proof of Apostolical succession is to be found in the fact of communion with a See, which is the first and the oldest of the sees of the world, the See of Rome. We say now what has been said in every age. St. Irenæus in the second century declares as an evidence of truth this succession from the Apostles ; but as it would be long, he says, to enumerate this succession in all the Churches, we point to the greatest, the most ancient and universally known Church of Rome, founded by the most glorious Apostles Peter and Paul ; to which Church,

on account of its most potent principality, it is necessary for every one to resort, to ascertain the tradition which has been preserved from the Apostles. And St. Augustine tells us, as I have once before cited, that amongst the links which bind him to the Catholic Church is "the succession of priests from the chair itself of the Apostle Peter, down to the present Bishop." Might not those words of St. Irenæus and St. Augustine be considered as if they were written by one of our Catholic Bishops in any of their pastoral addresses? We hold communion with the See of Rome; there is our proof of Apostolicity.

Here, then, is our argument. If there be now upon earth a Church which claims universal dominion and supreme authority in matters of Faith, for the very same reason as the Apostles did: which professes to speak in the name of God with His infallible sanction; whose doctrines are mysterious, and sound strangely to the world, and are therefore misunderstood and misrepresented: which not only claims the authority, but everywhere exercises it, and in that very exercise brings to herself not only the submission of her children, but the reproach and abuse of her adversaries: which men point at as superstitious, but yet cannot help secretly admiring and fearing as being something unworldly and supernatural: whose converts are looked down upon by the world, and are made to feel all the realities, yet all the sweetnesses of the Cross: whose followers, because they are faithful in religious allegiance to the representative of God, are suspected and wrongfully accused of being unfaithful in their temporal allegiance to Cæsar: such a Church is very much like the Church of Apostles. Such indeed is the Church of Rome, and such is her claim to Apostolicity.

III. I feel that I must be, and I know that I need only be brief, in what remains for me to do, namely, to disprove any claim which might be made to Apostoli-



city by the Church of England. I might urge against any such claim the very name by which the followers of this Church are universally known. Protestantism implies both in its theory and its practice a previously existing form of Christianity; therefore it is not Apostolical, because the Apostolical is the oldest and the first, from which have degenerated those of whom St. Paul says, that *there needs must be heresies*.\* I say in theory and in practice, because the fact of protesting implies as a principle the existence of that against which they protest, and most certainly their chief sign of activity is directed against the Catholic Church.

But apart from the name, the Church of England does not claim the same power as the Apostles. It does not claim infallibility as we have repeatedly shown, and does not therefore stand up as the Apostles did, to be received as speaking the word of God, and not merely the word of man. Nor does it claim a spiritual supremacy in the teaching body, inasmuch as its very teachers bind themselves by oath to declare, that spiritual supremacy belongs to the reigning sovereign. Is it not the case that our good queen in England has a power given to her on the theory of the Established Church, which Apostles never knew of? Is not Cæsar here allowed most certainly to trench upon the Province of God, if Faith is God's province, as it certainly is? Certainly a new system prevails, altogether unheard of in the time of the Apostles, when the Private Judgment of the individual is to be the last appeal, and according to the principle of the Thirty-Nine Articles, is to settle whether what the Church decides in controversies of Faith, is or is not conformable to the word of God.† Where was there room for this exercise of private judgment when Apostles spoke out and said: *He that be-*

\* 1 Cor. xi. 19.

† See Art. xx., which must mean this, if it means anything at all.

*Vereth not shall be condemned?* If the *Jews* of Beræa, before they accepted the Faith, were encouraged, as all enquirers must be, to look into the motives of evidence, the *Christians* of Thessalonica were not allowed to do so, but were praised for at once accepting the teaching of an Apostle as the very word of God. And in that great sphere of apostolical labour, the conversion of nations to the Faith of Christ, the mode adopted of circulating Bibles is a new, an ineffectual, and a most unapostolical procedure. What an easy substitution for the fatigues and ministerial labours of the great converters of kingdoms!

And the very constitutional form of ecclesiastical government in this Church is one which is unknown in Apostolical times. For whence is it that the bishops receive their appointment and jurisdiction? Not from any purely spiritual authority as Apostles did, but from the temporal sovereign of the realm. This Church being essentially National, has no visible link with any other Church upon earth, and therefore could never stand the test which, as we have but just seen, St. Irenæus orders us to apply. Owing to a total severance from the source of power, their ordination has lost its validity; for you know that Anglican orders are not admitted by us, though our orders and succession are and must be admitted by them. In one word, did the Apostles ever know of a Church, in which it was an essential element, to which they were ever constrained to bind themselves by oath to admit, that the king or queen of a kingdom was to be the only supreme head on earth, even in things spiritual?

Do not, my dear brethren, misunderstand me, or think that I seem ungenerous in claiming exclusively for the Church of Rome, what some might suppose we could and ought to concede to others. Remember what is our argument, what is the great truth we have to establish, and how important it is that it should



be established. We want to know what is meant when we say, that we believe in the Holy Catholic Church, or the One Holy Catholic and Apostolical Church. There is but one Apostolical Church, and no amount of false and mistaken charity and generosity can make more than one. It is God Himself who founded the Church and invested it with a character which He jealously supports in her, and of which He will not have her to be robbed. He founded her *upon the foundation of the Apostles*; and therefore the moment that you would take from her her Apostolical Mark, you uproot her very foundation, and bring her down in a confused and desolating ruin. When we are obliged, in defending the position and claims of the Catholic Church, to institute that comparison which we have instituted of rival claims, I know that there necessarily must be the chance of exciting a kind of jealousy on the part of those whose claims we are conscientiously bound to disown. But it has always been amongst the consequences of truth, that it raises up enemies as well as friends. And this is especially the case with Christian and Apostolical truth. What was the case with our dearest Saviour, the meekest and most loving of men? He came to preach the truth, and to be the resurrection of many in Israel. But the prophet had to foretell of Him that He was to be set up as a sign to be contradicted; and the very reason of His being contradicted was because He spoke the truth. He was the Son of God; and He said so. Therefore men who loved not the truth stood up against Him, and accused Him of blasphemy, and they would have stoned Him. But they did buffet Him, and they seized upon Him and crucified Him; and all that, just because He spoke the truth, and defended the right.

And it was the same with the Apostles. They were sent like sheep into the midst of wolves; and at

the very first foundation of the Church of which they were the Apostles, they were to show that an Apostle and a preacher of the truth must needs even be a martyr, for he must be prepared to meet the anger and displeasure of the world. Thus, opposition of the world is one of the evidences of Apostolicity. But Apostles can do more than suffer: they can gain souls, and they are armed with powers of persuasiveness. They can prove that if after all they are willing and ready to suffer and to incur persecution, they are not unreasonable, and their conduct is not motiveless. They are accused of folly by the world, but they can show that there is method in their foolishness. They have a cause that is worth labouring for, that is worth suffering for, and that is worth dying for. Blame us not then if we speak aloud, and say what ought not to be kept secret, that God has but one Church upon earth, and that that Church is Apostolical; and therefore that the Church which is not Apostolical, is disowned by God, and is not blessed nor loved by Him. It was when our dear Saviour was with the Apostles, and had just been establishing His Church, that He cried out, and wished to be heard by the whole world: *He that is not with Me is against Me, and He that gathereth not with Me, scattereth.\** And it was in the midst of his Apostolical labours that St. Paul solemnly announced: *If any one preach to you a Gospel, besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.†* Was it in unkindness that the sacred lips of our most loving Lord spoke that truth, or was it not rather in His goodness and mercy in order that none might scatter, but that all might gather with Him? Or was it in an ungenerous spirit that St. Paul thus spoke out with Apostolical liberty, and not rather in that feeling of devotedness which made him elsewhere

\* LUKE xi. 23.

† GAL. i. 9.

declare, that he was willing to spend himself and to be spent for the souls of his children?\*

If you could only understand how God loves His Church, you would love her for His sake, and would be glad to hear her privileges defended, and her beauty held out in all its attractiveness. And if you could understand how Apostles laboured in planting it, and how they watered it in its earliest existence with their blood, in imitation of the Good Shepherd who had laid down His life for His sheep, you would not allow yourself too easily to give up the honour of the Church, to communicate its prerogatives to others who have not received nor inherited them, and to attribute to hirelings the character that belongs to the faithful shepherd alone. And if you could see the Church as saints have seen her, could understand her anxiety, appreciate the efficacy of her working, could study her maternal restlessness and eagerness when the cause of God and of souls is at stake, you would shed hot tears of sorrow over those who know her not, and who will not be drawn under her tender keeping. For others your prayer would be, and let it be so! that the exaltation of the Church may be quickly realized, of which the prophet spoke so joyfully: *In the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it.*† And for yourself you would pray with fervour: *One thing have I asked of the Lord, this will I seek for, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.*‡

\* 2 Cor. xii. 15.

† Isaias, ii. 2

‡ Ps. xxvi.





LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXIV.

PAPAL SUPREMACY.

*(Scripture.)*





## LECTURE XXIV.

### PAPAL SUPREMACY.

*(Scripture.)*

I am most anxious, my dear Brethren, to condense as much as possible all that I have to say at present on the very important subject to which I have to call your attention this evening, Papal Supremacy : that is to say, the supremacy of St. Peter amongst the Apostles, continued in his successors in the See of Rome. I feel that I have a great amount of matter to bring before you ; and the only word that I will lose by way of introduction, is to remind you that we are still dwelling upon the Apostolicity of the Church, of which this perpetual succession is such a visible and convincing proof. The succession is public and uninterrupted, and presents a dynasty to which the history of the world presents no parallel. It is public, as all the world knows : it is uninterrupted, as we shall see.

I. Let us commence by coming to an understanding as to what is meant by Papal Supremacy, or by the Primacy, Headship, and Superiority of the See of Rome. It means that the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, holds the first place in honour and jurisdiction over the Church throughout the world : that he is upon earth the fountain and source of spiritual jurisdiction. From him every other bishop in the world receives his appointment, and is authorised to rule the flock entrusted to his care. With him every bishop is bound to hold

communion if he would not be schismatical; and through him, as the means and the centre, all bishops hold communion with each other. In matters of controversy he is the ultimate appeal, and when he decides judicially the question is at rest for ever. It is his place to call and to preside at the General Councils of the Church; and no Particular Councils are of any weight, if disapproved of and condemned by him. Mind, I am not yet proving or defending. I am only stating what I intend to prove and defend; for I wish you to have a clear notion of the matter on which I am to engage your attention, and therefore I commence by defining our terms.

Our statement of the case is as follows. When Jesus Christ founded His Church, He chose twelve Apostles to form that foundation. He wished that the twelve should not be totally independent of each other, but that they should form but one Church, and He therefore united them into one body. And there was to be a visible bond of union, and a visible head to this one body. Certainly when He Himself was on earth, He was the visible Head; and the Apostles received their power from Him, and exercised their ministry through a commission received from Him. Therefore at that time the Church had the same organization as it has now, consisting of the faithful under the Pastors, and the Pastors under one Head. And when He was about to leave the Apostles, it is certain that out of the twelve He chose one to whom He gave a special power and special honour. He said to St. Peter what He said to no other among the Apostles, and He bestowed upon him what He did not bestow upon the rest. He made Him the Head of His Church, so that its visible perfection was not injured; and after the Ascension the Church was still one, and the Unity was preserved by the presence of the Head which kept the body as one. And this Headship of St. Peter was

exercised among the Apostles, and was recognized and submitted to.

Was it the will of Christ that the Church should ever change its organization? Or was it not His Will that what He formed should continue for ever? The principle and the fact of the Catholic Church show us, that this form of government established by our Lord does continue, and the Papal Supremacy is a great reality. Such a Supremacy is as much wanted now, as it was wanted at the foundation of Christianity. Unity is still a necessary evidence and accompaniment of truth, and Unity requires a Headship as an essential requisite for its security. The theory and practice of the Catholic Church, as we have seen, is one of Unity, and it is in order to be true to her principle that she ever keeps up her central authority. Beyond any possibility of doubt, the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, does hold supremacy in the Church throughout the world which is in communion with him, that is as we have proved, in the Catholic Church. And this supremacy is being constantly exercised, and is a public well-acknowledged fact. What was its origin? Is it an usurpation, or is it of divine right and institution? Certainly there is no other person or prelate in the world who claims the right which he claims. He asserts it on the ground that it was given to St. Peter, to be transmitted to his successors, and he is one of these successors; and the whole Catholic Church submits gladly to that claim, and agrees with him in upholding it. It is my duty, then, to defend this claim, and to show how it has its sanction in Scripture, and is supported by the testimony of history and of fact.

II. The authority of sacred Scripture in support of the pre-eminence of St. Peter, is so overwhelming that those must be wilfully blind who will not see it; or they ought never to think of quoting the inspired writings in defence of any doctrine, if they will not

admit its testimony in favour of our position. I will divide the texts into three classes. First of all I will cite those which indirectly and by way of preparation point to the Supremacy.

1. And to commence with the enumeration of the Apostles as given by each of the Evangelists. In St. Matthew we read: *The names of the twelve Apostles are these: the first, Simon who is called Peter.\** And then follow the others. In St. Mark the list also commences with *To Simon He gave the name Peter.†* In St. Luke in like manner, *Simon whom he surnamed Peter,‡* heads the list. In St. John there is not given a formal list; but when this Evangelist first mentions St. Peter's name on the occasion of his call, he attaches an incident to this call, saying, And Jesus looking upon him said: *Thou art Simon the Son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter.‡* Observe, that in these lists the names of the other Apostles are given in a different order by each Evangelist, but all agree in giving the first place to St. Peter.—Now, passing on to some of the events recorded in the Gospels, we meet a very striking one related in St. Matthew. At Cesarea Philippi Jesus is in the midst of the Apostles, and having asked them first what men thought of Him, and then what they said of Him, though the question is put to all, and all answered when it was merely to give the opinion of others, Peter alone answers when it is to give the profession of the Faith of the Apostles: *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to Him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee*

\* Matt. x. 2.

† Mark iii. 16.

‡ Luke vi. 14

§ John i. 42.

*that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.\**

Here is certainly a very solemn promise made in the presence of all the Apostles, who were to be witnesses of it, of an honour and pre-eminence to be given to St. Peter. In the next chapter of St. Matthew is a very striking fact recorded by which our dear Saviour shows how He in a manner would be identified with St. Peter, and how it was known to others besides the Apostles that St. Peter was the chief amongst them. All the disciples are with our Lord at Capharnaum. The collectors of the tribute money come and ask Peter whether his Master paid the tribute. Peter answered that He did; and when Jesus told Peter that in reality He might claim exemption but would not, He ordered him: *Go to the sea, and cast in a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: take that, and give it to them for Me and thee.†* Notice the immense value of this testimony. The head of each household had to pay this tax, therefore the collectors asked Peter whether His Master, the head of the household formed of the Apostles, would pay it. And when Jesus orders it to be paid, He commands it to be paid in Peter's name as well as His own, as a public testimony that the Headship was shared by Peter. Let us now turn to the account of the Transfiguration, in which our dear Lord gives a striking proof of His Divinity. Three Apostles are chosen to witness it, Peter, and James, and John. And as St. Luke goes on giving the account of this wonderful event, and has

\* Matt. xvi. 13-19.

† Matt. xvii. 23-26.

occasion again to mention the names of the witnesses, he says: *Peter and they that were with him*. And when they speak to our Lord, it is only Peter who says in the name of all, *Master, it is good for us to be here!*\* In what might be called the corresponding proof of His Sacred Humanity in His Agony at Gethsemani, the same three are again chosen, Peter and James and John: and the same detail is found. Three are chosen out of the twelve, and one made pre-eminent amongst the three to speak and be spoken to. At the time of the last Supper, when our Blessed Lord is addressing all the Apostles, He breaks in suddenly with a special address and warning to Peter, assures him of His special prayer for his Faith, and orders him when converted to *confirm thy brethren*.†

Now, from all these texts which, remember, are but indirect and preparatory, as connected with the primacy of St. Peter, we argue, and we maintain that we are not only justified in arguing, but are compelled by their number and importance to conclude, that there is a privilege here intimated in favour of St. Peter. Beyond any doubt there is a prominence given to him in the Gospels beyond the other Apostles, and our dearest Lord treats him in a marked manner, and deals with him both in His words and actions in an exceptional way. It is not one isolated passage disconnected from context or comparison with other passages, that we adduce. I have brought several before you, but have not cited all; but surely I have adduced enough to establish the fact that St. Peter is allowed by the Evangelists a distinction amongst the followers of our Lord. If Scripture does not declare this, how can it ever be cited in support of any revealed truth?

2. But there is not only indirect evidence and a preparation for the Supremacy of St. Peter: we have

\* Luke ix. 28-33.

† Luke xxii. 31, 32.



a positive assurance of its being actually and solemnly bestowed. We turn to the twenty-first chapter of St. John, and we read there of a formal act on the part of our dear Lord. The Resurrection has taken place, and Jesus is soon to go to His Father. The Church is being perfected, and all is being arranged for its working after the withdrawal of His visible presence. He appears to Peter who was fishing with six others of the disciples, and one of the last events of His life is recorded as then occurring. He shows why, when St. Peter first joined Him, He looked upon him with singular love, and gave him the name of Peter, making him the rock of the Church; and why at a later time at Cesarea Philippi He repeated the promise with additional solemnity. He is now going to transfer to Peter His own favourite title of Shepherd, and to commit to him the great but loving responsibility of feeding the flock which He had gathered together. Hear the commission. *Jesus said to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest Thou Me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs. He saith to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He had said to him the third time, lovest thou Me? And he said to Him: Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep.\** It was on this occasion that Peter was invested with that Supremacy which he always afterwards exercised, and which he has transmitted to his successors in the Catholic Church. It cannot be pretended that the words were meant for all the Apostles, for only six

\* John xxi. 15. 17.



others were present, enough to be witnesses of the solemn investiture. And to show that they were not included, you will observe that our Lord had just before spoken to them all in the plural number; but He here singles out St. Peter, compares him with the others as to his degree of love in order to exclude them, and to prove that the power here given was singular, and pre-eminent.

Nor can any objection be made on the plea that our Blessed Lord uses figurative words of feeding lambs and sheep instead of the literal words, ruling the people and the Church. For it can scarcely be said that the word *pastoral* is figurative when applied to the care of souls, inasmuch as it was distinctly understood to bear that meaning at the time that our dear Lord spoke His words, and is understood beyond all doubt to bear that meaning now. Our dear Lord called Himself the Good Shepherd: He called the people His Flock: He called the Church His Sheepfold. And therefore nothing can be more clear than what He meant, when He gave to Peter that threefold *pastoral* power. Indeed one of the words that is used in the Greek text for feeding, is more expressive than we can well convey in English. It rather means to rule over and govern. And the threefold order shows plenitude and supremacy of power here committed to Peter, to teach the children of the Church, both Jews and Gentiles, to govern them, and even to govern the Sheep which in the flock have the care of the lambs, that is of those in the Church who share in the exercise of the ministry. It is the whole Flock of Christ which is placed under the care of Peter: all His lambs and all His sheep. The other Apostles are to take care of the portions the Flock entrusted to them, but to Peter alone is the whole entrusted. There is assuredly a reality here: something is meant by this solemn threefold commission given after a threefold profession of love. It is that something which is so

real, that it continues even now in that successor of Peter, who by virtue of the authority transmitted to him, is acknowledged to be the chief Pastor and Ruler of the Universal Church.

3. But have we any authority in Sacred Scripture for the exercise of a superior authority on the part of St. Peter? Yes, my dear Brethren, abundant and overwhelming. Let us turn to the Acts of the Apostles in which we find recorded the events which occurred after our dear Lord's Ascension. And observe, what St. Chrysostom remarks for our instruction, that these Acts are divided into two parts. The first twelve chapters give us the account of the Apostles in general: the remaining part is devoted almost exclusively to the labours of St. Paul, of whom St. Luke, the author of the Acts, was the disciple. It is a fact that in the first twelve chapters the name of Peter stands forward most prominently. As one evidence of this, take a Concordance, and you will find Peter's name fifty-three times in this portion of the Acts, very much more frequently than all the other Apostles put together; St. John's name, which comes next in prominence, being only mentioned nine times. This surely is a fact which signifies something, and must tell of St. Peter's influence in the Apostolical College, and in the early working of the Church. And to mention some of the instances: in Chap. i, we have a list of the Apostles,\* Peter's name as usual standing first. In this same Chapter, St. Mathias is chosen as the twelfth Apostle in place of Judas, but it is St. Peter who alone speaks and orders the election.† In Chap. ii, we have the account of the great Day of Pentecost, when men from all nations came to witness the confirmation of the Church; but again in the presence of all it is St. Peter alone who speaks, and upon his word men believe, and

\* Acts. i. 13.

† Acts. i. 15.

three thousand souls were added to the Church. In Chap. iii, Peter and John perform the first miracle, in the healing of the lame man at the gate of the Temple; but Peter alone speaks and commands him to rise. In Chap. iv, Peter stands up in the presence of the High Priest and other Jewish authorities in defence of the Church and the Apostles. In Chap. v, Ananias and Saphira are judged by the Apostles for their prevarication. It is St. Peter alone who speaks and declares in the Name of God the nature of the crime, which God so visibly and so terribly punished upon his sentence. Chapters vi. and vii. are devoted to the martyrdom of St. Stephen. In Chap. viii, we have the first mention of the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, and Peter and John are its ministers. In Chap. ix, St. Peter is represented as going round to visit all the Churches.\* In Chap. x, the Gentiles are received into the Church by Peter; and in Chap. xi, gives to the Apostles an explanation of his motives in thus receiving them, upon which they all submit and *held their peace*.† In Chap. xii, we are told of the imprisonment of Peter, and that the whole Church without ceasing offered up prayer for him.‡

And passing on to Chap. xv, we come to that most instructive event, the Council of the Apostles assembled in Jerusalem. Here we break into that part which tells us about the labours of St. Paul. A very important question arose which demanded a decision. The question was whether, on the admission into the Church of those who had not been Jews, it was necessary that they should first of all express their adhesion to the Old Law, and be circumcised before their baptism. St. Peter, remember, had already by his own act and authority, as we have seen in Chap. x, done what God

\* Acts. ix. 32.

† Acts. xi. 18.

‡ Acts, xii. 5.

had directed him to do, and had not required this previous submission to the Jewish ceremonial law. But St. Paul wanted direction, and came to Jerusalem to know how this question was to be decided as a guide for future action. Here was a Controversy, and the Church was to decide it in Council. Weigh well what was the mode of procedure. The Apostles and elders assembled together.\* First there ensues great discussion, and then Peter stands up and speaks. He defines what ought to be done, and tells the Apostles not to tempt God by imposing a yoke on the Gentiles which God did not impose. Thus what he himself had done in a similar instance, he defines ought to be done now and for ever. Now note what was the result. Though before Peter spoke there was much discussion, after he spoke the Scripture says: *Then all the multitude kept silence.* There is not another word of discussion; the subject is changed; Paul and Barnabas give an account of their progress and miracles. St. James, the Bishop of Jerusalem where the Council was held, adds a few words of adhesion to the sentence of St. Peter, as if expressing the instant submission of all to his decision, and letters are sent round, like the decrees of a Council, telling all whom it concerned that it had seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to themselves, that the decision there arrived at should be the law of the Church. Here is a fact of the highest and most striking importance, giving to St. Peter in the presence of all the Apostles, an influence and an eminence paramount to that of all the others. Though the Council is held in Jerusalem, and St. James was the Bishop of that See, it is not he, though he was even the close relative and called the brother of our Lord, who speaks first, but it is Peter; the privilege being reserved to James, when the matter was set at rest, to express in the name of

\* Acts, xv. 6.

the other Apostles his adhesion to the definitive sentence of Peter. Here beyond doubt is a practical proof and evidence of a pre-eminence belonging to St. Peter, not of honour only, but of jurisdiction also.

Now, from all these passages of Sacred Scripture, what are we to conclude? I would ask not what conclusion we are justified in drawing, but what conclusion is forced upon us, if we will not be blind to all the teaching of the inspired word of God. Can Scripture ever be adduced, I ask again, in support of any doctrine, if its evidence is denied here? It is not one isolated passage whose meaning is uncertain, and which is urged by a possible or probable interpretation, that we have adduced; but I must have fatigued you with the very enumeration of passages, though I still leave many untouched, and many have not at all been driven to their full extent. The question is this. Is there or is there not given in the Scriptures, a pre-eminence to Peter, and a pre-eminence or supremacy of jurisdiction amongst the Apostles. I have cited facts, words, promises, solemn actions and a constant exercise. If in every list of the Apostles Peter's name always comes first; if in every privilege given to any Apostles Peter is first amongst the privileged; if he is the spokesman of all, and is addressed as the representative of all, is not this a reality belonging to him, and unshared by any other; and does it not *mean* something? If our dear Saviour changes his name from Simon into Peter, which means a Rock, and tells him that he is the Rock upon which He will build His Church, and that to him especially are to be given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, does that promise signify nothing at all, especially when it stands not by itself, but stands in connexion with the facts just cited? If our Blessed Lord three times entrusts to him the whole pastoral care of the Church, is this commission unmeaning, placed too by the side of the above facts and promise?



And when we find these facts, promises, and solemn bestowal, illustrated by the constant exercise of superiority on the part of St. Peter brought before us in so many parts of the Acts of the Apostles, are we to say that this is an accident, that it means nothing, and that we can read this without any impression being made upon us, that St. Peter differed at all from the rest of the Apostles? God forbid that we should ever treat the Scripture with such little respect, and not be influenced by such an accumulation of force in its telling us of one great fact which it will not allow us to ignore!

What we maintain is this; that there is in Scripture such an abundance of evidence for the Primacy of St. Peter, that we could not wish for evidence more clear, more direct, and more abundant. And on whatever principle we proceed, this evidence ought to be admitted as convincing. If we go on the Protestant principle of the Bible only, and interpreted by Private Judgment, the evidence must be admitted. If we go on the Catholic principle of accepting the testimony of Scripture presented to us by an infallible authority, the evidence is beyond all possibility of doubt. Nay, we might add, that if the Acts of the Apostles were written for no other purpose, but to tell us that St. Peter exercised a Primacy amongst the Apostles, they would have done their work fully and convincingly. And so we conclude from our searching the Scriptures, that our Blessed Lord did treat St. Peter with singular distinction; that He gave to him a promise of supreme honour and jurisdiction; that He most solemnly fulfilled this promise; and that St. Peter was recognized as Primate amongst the Apostles, and upon every occasion that called for it, exercised this Primacy, without any demur and with complete and universal acquiescence and submission on the part of the Apostles.

III. I must have already fatigued you, my dear brethren, with all that I have brought before you, and yet on the question of Papal Supremacy, I have but half-finished the task which is incumbent upon me. For I still have to treat of the great fact of the transmission of this supremacy from St. Peter to his successors. I am anxious not to condense the matter which I have at hand too much, and therefore will allow the historical and traditional question to stand over till next Sunday. I will then show you how we can fill up the interval between St. Peter and the present Pope, the acknowledged head of the Catholic Church. For we have now two facts beyond dispute. There is the living fact which all the world knows, and which the events of the last few years have made to be well enough known, that the Pope of Rome is accepted by us as the Supreme Head of our Church. There is another fact which, after what we have gone through to-night, I cannot conceive anybody to be so ignorant as to say that he does not know, that St. Peter was the visible head of the Church of the Apostles after our dear Lord's Ascension. We account for the present reality, by that past reality of which so much evidence has been brought home to us; and it will not be hard to show that that great reality has always subsisted, and was as true in every age, as it is now and was then.

But I should perhaps be leaving the present part of the argument incomplete, if I did not bring in the testimony of St. Paul, and answer a difficulty, which, without any depth whatever on the part of those who adduce it, has been adduced as to the connexion between St. Peter and St. Paul. Let me particularly call your attention to the totally different mode of dealing with Scripture on the part of these objectors, from that which the Catholic Church adopts. We do not deal with a single isolated passage; but, as you have

seen, we bring a heap of passages, showing the bearing of one upon the other, and thus bringing before us what is the consistent and living meaning of the Scripture. But in order to overthrow this accumulative evidence Protestants "wresting," as St. Peter himself had said was the case with false interpreters in his time, St. Paul's "Epistles, in which are certain things hard to be understood, to their own destruction," try and force the beginning of the Epistle to the Galatians, as a protest on St. Paul's part against St. Peter's Supremacy. Before giving an explanation, which from the necessity of the case must here be very brief, let me state a fact which every Catholic knows and which is daily manifested amongst us, namely, that the Church of Rome associates together St. Peter and St. Paul, as being linked in themselves and in her mind in the closest bond. They are together the Patrons of the City of Rome where both of them completed their martyrdom; their festival is celebrated on the same day, the Church not dissociating them in her calendar, or reserving a special day for St. Peter, though always maintaining his supremacy with such constant and loyal fidelity; in our prayers we combine them and invoke their joint intercession; knowing that as in their life and labours they were so closely united, neither in death nor in the memory of the Church are they to be nor have they been separated. This very Epistle to the Galatians is used by the Fathers as a very strong corroborative testimony of St. Peter's pre-eminence. The object of St. Paul in this Epistle is to enforce what had been defined in the Council of Jerusalem, against the necessity of the works of the Jewish ceremonial law, now that Christianity had set them free from that obligation. In order to give power to his words, he alludes to his miraculous conversion and calling to the Apostleship, as if to urge upon the Galatians, that to resist his teaching would be to resist one



who had received a striking proof of a divine commission in the very nature of his call. But he gives another proof. He states that, though for some time he laboured without having had any personal communication with the Apostles, he went up twice to Jerusalem, the first time to visit Peter, with whom he remained for fifteen days,\* and the second time fourteen years later,† to assist at that Council of Jerusalem, the history of which is recorded in Acts xv. Here certainly is a double sign of St. Paul's acknowledgment of some special honour due to Peter, one being an act of respect to his person, and the other to his office: for in that Council we have seen that St. Paul said not a word, but simply after St. Peter's definitive decision, gave an account of his labours and success.

But it is objected, that in enumerating the three Apostles who especially welcomed him, he names them in this order, James, Cephas, and John, not placing Peter first. Many explanations are given of this. We have many testimonies, especially of St. Chrysostom, that there are versions of the Scriptures which in this passage do place Cephas first. Again some, among whom is St. Clement of Alexandria, no mean authority, maintain that the Cephas here spoken of, and just after, was not St. Peter but one of the disciples who bore that name. But admitting, as is generally admitted, that it was St. Peter, the fact of mentioning him second in this one place, is not sufficient to counterbalance the priority given to him everywhere else, especially when a full list of the Apostles is given, as we have seen, is always the case. In mentioning the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, the uniform custom in Scripture is to place them in the order of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and yet St. Paul in that well-known blessing with which he ends his second Epistle to the

\* Gal. i. 18.

† Gal. ii. 1.

Corinthians, places the Son before the Father. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the charity of God, and the communication of the Holy Ghost.\** The Apostle probably is enumerating the order in which he met these three Apostles, St. James as Bishop of Jerusalem constantly residing there, Cephas and John not being so habitually in the city.

And when in ver. 11, St. Paul says that at Antioch he withstood Cephas to the face, and censured him for a want of openness upon the point of observing those very ceremonial laws, which in their council they had declared were not necessary, the fact of St. Paul telling the Galatians that he did not hesitate to withstand the very head of the Church in a matter (not of faith, because St. Peter had himself defined the question, but) of policy and prudence, is only to strengthen his argument, and to induce the Galatians to give him credit for sincerity in the matter which he was impressing upon them. Certainly we see no disparagement of the Supremacy of St. Peter, that St. Paul should cite the fact of his opposition to him on a matter of policy, as a strong argument in favour of his sincerity. That it was only a matter of policy, and one that at that moment was difficult in practice to decide upon, is clear from St. Paul's own conduct. Of his two disciples St. Timothy and St. Titus, he deemed it expedient to observe the law of circumcision with the former, *because of the Jews,†* but he would by no means allow it in the case of the latter.‡ These facts show that though the observance of the ceremonial law was not *necessary*, there were cases when such observance was *expedient*. St. Peter's policy at Antioch was only a question of expediency, and that is a question in which, though the

\* 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

† Acts xvi. 3.

‡ Gal. ii. 3.

principle is agreed upon, the application will differ owing to circumstances.

To us, then, my dear brethren, such a difficulty presents no obstacle whatever, to the overwhelming testimony everywhere adduced in the inspired word in favour of St. Peter's Supremacy. On the contrary it does what all objections tend to do, it brings out into greater relief the truth which the objection is intended to overthrow. It will show how the glorious Apostle St. Paul, the Doctor of the Gentiles as he called himself, and as the Church loves to call him, could lay aside for a time all the labours with which he was overwhelmed, and in the midst of his solicitude for all the churches, would go to Jerusalem to strengthen himself by the advice and example of St. Peter; how he loved unity and an agreement upon matters of faith and discipline, and that his great test of unity would be to find himself in correspondence with St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles. It was his motto and rule that we should always be careful to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*;\* and his visits to Jerusalem showed how sincerely he acted up to his teaching. May his spirit and zeal descend upon all the teachers in the Church, and when under such an influence we see the overwhelming testimony of Scripture in support of the truth which we have defended, may we for our caution remember what he tells us, that *whatsoever things have been written have been written for our instruction*! †

\* Eph. iv. 4.

† Rom. xv. 4.

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXV.

PAPAL SUPREMACY.

*(History, &c.)*

## LECTURE XXV.

### PAPAL SUPREMACY.

*(History, &c.)*

I think, my dear brethren, that I might consider myself justified in dismissing the question of Papal Supremacy, after all that was said upon that important subject on Sunday last. For the nature of the argument certainly ought to have satisfied those, who call upon us to prove every truth from Scripture, and who profess that they will be satisfied when such testimony can be adduced. It would be difficult to bring such accumulative Scripture evidence in support of any other doctrine, and therefore those who declare that the Scripture alone is their Rule, ought at once to be willing to submit, and to accept the truth thus strongly and irresistibly forced upon them. It was not, you will remember, one or two passages only that were brought forward, but we found in Scripture texts which we could even classify and systematize. We recited facts and promises, and a solemn fulfilment of the promises, together with repeated instances of an exercise of the supreme power bestowed upon the Apostle St. Peter. And we felt ourselves justified in declaring that if the Scriptures have ever proved any truth, they prove the pre-eminence of St. Peter in honour and jurisdiction, and that those who refuse this testimony ought never again to pretend to ground any doctrine upon Scripture. In our defence, then, of Papal Supremacy, we have two facts which we maintain are indisputable, and must be granted. First; there was a Supremacy amongst the Apostles which belonged to, and was exer-

cised by, St. Peter. Second; there is a Supremacy exercised by the Pope in the Church of Rome, which we claim to have originated in St. Peter, and to have been transmitted by him to his successors. The question, I have said, might be considered to be now concluded; but I must place before you a further justification of the Authority of the Holy See, and especially show to you how what was founded in Scripture and is actually exercised now, has been admitted and has been in full active work in every age since the establishment of Christianity.

I. Let me state the proposition which I am proceeding to prove to you. It is this. The Pope, or Bishop of Rome, has by Divine Right the same supremacy in the Catholic Church now, as St. Peter had in the Apostolic Church. For, observe what we always consistently insist upon, namely, that the Church is Apostolical, and this is the Mark of the Church which we are still investigating. Our principle, from which we never swerve, is that whatever the Church was in the days of the Apostles, she is precisely the same now: whatever gift was bestowed upon her then, as essential to her constitution, she holds and must hold now. For the Church was founded by our dear Lord as His kingdom upon earth, and He certainly declared that it should continue for ever. The gates of hell would always be trying to overthrow this kingdom, but were not to prevail; for He Himself and His Holy Spirit were to be on the side of the Church in her battles, and this was to be the secret of her success. The course of arguing which I have to pursue this evening does not require the assistance of the Sacred Scripture; but before entering directly upon the historical proof and the perpetual testimony of the Fathers, let me premise two or three observations.

1. When we say that the Papal Supremacy is of Divine right, we ground our assertion on the distinct

testimony of the Scriptures. For the Scripture testimony in favour of the Supremacy of St. Peter convinces also of the Supremacy of the Pope in every age of the Church, and therefore of the Supremacy of the present Pope. If, then, we are asked whether we maintain that the Scriptures can afford proof of the Divine Right of the present Pope Pius IX. we answer, that they undoubtedly can and do so. For the Scriptures tell us of this, as a first principle, that there is and must be in the Church upon earth, one visible Supreme Head or chief authority, and that this Head must be obeyed. The Scriptures do not tell us of the Person, they tell us of the Office and of the perpetuity of that Office; and whatever person bears that office, does thereby inherit its power and privilege. To say that the Scriptures say nothing of the present Pope, and that we cannot therefore prove his Divine Right from Scripture, would be as unreasonable as for a child to justify his disobedience to a parent, on the plea that that parent is not mentioned in Scripture. When the Scriptures say: Honour thy father and thy mother, they lay down the Divine right of parents, which is infringed in every act of disobedience. And so the Scriptures lay down the Divine Right of every successor of St. Peter, when they state his supremacy and the perpetuity of that supremacy. This they do state as we have very fully seen; the Supremacy being stated repeatedly; and the perpetuity more particularly when our dear Lord declared that He would build His Church on Peter, thus making him the foundation of, and therefore perpetually existing in the Church; and when He made him the Feeder and Shepherd of the lambs and sheep, which must be scattered and necessarily perish when such a care should be withdrawn.

2. There is even an antecedent necessity for such a Supremacy in the Church as we defend and maintain;



and not necessary only that it should exist, but that it should be divinely founded and supported. So that if even there were no positive testimony of Scripture in support of the Supremacy, we might defend its existence from the very nature of the work which the Church has to do. St. Jerome stated the necessity of such a supremacy, when he says that although Christ founded the Church upon all the Apostles, and gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to all, yet he also gives this power singly and individually to Peter: "for this reason," he says, "one is chosen out of the twelve, that by the appointment of a Head, all occasion of schism might be removed." The very idea of unity, of progress, of life, of activity, of motion, of force, implies a central controlling power in order that harmony may be preserved. How could the Church be said to be One, and preserve that Unity, if there were not a visible bond and security for it upon earth? And as the contest and work of the Church is supernatural, and is against the world and in favour of God, and as it is appointed to do God's work by God Himself, its security and means cannot be merely human, but must be from God, and be supported by Him. Thus the Supremacy is from Him, and is an evidence and a mark of God's presence in His Church.

3. And we may point to the supremacy of the Pope in the Catholic Church, as a fact. It is too great a fact to be possibly ignored. I am not yet saying it ought to be, I say it *is*, whether it ought to be or not. We, of course, admit that it ought to be, as well as that it *is*. Our enemies fight against it, try to destroy it, say it ought not to be, that it is wrong and an usurpation, all of which is admitting that it *is*. Now what we have to do is to show not only that it *is*, but that it always has been, and that it has all the characters of Divine origin. And not only is this Supremacy a fact, but it is the fact to which we always point as a proof

of our Apostolicity. It is here that we trace a succession from St. Peter: it is here that we declare we have the central authority for the appointment of pastors and for the conferring of spiritual jurisdiction; and as a fact it is against this power that the world arrays itself in its protests against what it calls spiritual tyranny, and in its endeavours to emancipate the human mind from a thralldom which the world condemns. Papal Supremacy is then admitted universally to be a fact, even if not as a right. With us it is a fact and a right also; with the world it is a fact, though not a right, and it is admitted in order to be fought against.—Now, what I shall have to prove is this: that the Supremacy of the Pope, which has its groundwork in Scripture, as we have seen; which is wanted in the Church, as we see from its very necessity and nature; and which is actually recognised and maintained in the Church of Rome, ought to be admitted, and bears about it all the characters of a Divine institution.

II. As it was the intention of Christ when He gave certain powers to the Apostles, that those powers should remain for ever, as we have declared in defending the Apostolicity of the Church, and that the manner in which they were to remain for ever was by being transmitted by the Apostles to those who came after them, so when He conferred the Primacy on St. Peter, it was His intention that St. Peter should transmit that essential character and power to his successor. The only claimant in the world to immediate succession from St. Peter is the Bishop of Rome: and we have as abundant and accumulative evidence from history of this fact, as we have from Scripture of St. Peter's appointment to his pre-eminence. I will not discuss the question of St. Peter's having gone to Rome, and fixed his see there. I will only state as a fact which is supported by the most convincing historical evidence that

St. Peter having for some time ruled the Church at Antioch, removed to Rome, fixed his see there, and suffered martyrdom in that city. St. Clement of Rome declares that he was present and witnessed this event. St. Irenæus declares it most distinctly : there is an unbroken list of authorities in favour of this fact, in all historians who have treated the question; and it is so manifest that the best Protestant historians say it is true beyond the possibility of doubt.\* What I maintain is this: that that see must be admitted to have inherited by Divine Right the Supremacy of St. Peter, which in every age has claimed and exercised the Supremacy: to which the Bishops of the Church throughout the world have uniformly assigned that pre-eminence: to which the fathers and writers of every age bear testimony as possessing it; and to which even a similar testimony, however unwillingly, is given by the conduct of its adversaries.

1. With regard to the claim and exercise of a Supremacy by the Bishop of Rome, what St. Peter did in the Acts of the Apostles, has been done in every age. We have Pope St. Clement, the next but two in succession after St. Peter, towards the end of the first century, writing from Rome to the Church of Corinth, urging unity on the occasion of dissensions which had arisen there. Though St. John the Evangelist was still living, and was at Ephesus so much nearer to Corinth, it is not he who writes, but Clement the Bishop of Rome, showing the solicitude for all the Churches which had devolved upon him by virtue of his office. In the second century we have Pope St. Victor I. writing authoritatively from Rome, and commanding a Bishop of Ephesus, under pain of excommu-

\* Calvin, Inst. lib. iv. c. vi. says that the testimony of all the ancients on this fact of St. Peter's residence at Rome is undoubted. The Protestant historians, Cave, Ussher, and Pearson, maintain the same, and that St. Peter was the first Bishop of Rome.

nication, to conform to the uniform custom in the Western Churches regarding the time for the celebration of Easter. In the third century the celebrated St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage and Primate of Africa, sent from Africa to Rome, for the approval of the decrees of a Synod which reprobated the baptism of heretics, and declared it invalid. St. Stephen, the Pope, refused his approval, declared such baptism valid, declared that no innovation should be made on the tradition of the Church, and threatened excommunication to all who would not submit to his decision. In this same third century we find St. Denis of Alexandria when wrongfully accused of heresy on the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, and called upon by his namesake St. Denis the Pope, to justify himself, writing to the Pope and clearing himself from the charge which had been brought against him. I limit myself to these early instances; for if we can show in the three or four first centuries a Supremacy existed in the Pope of Rome, it is quite enough to prove that this Supremacy is not a modern usurpation.

2. Let me now call your attention to a few facts from the General Councils, in order to show you what has been the belief of the bishops throughout the world; and I will limit myself to the four first General Councils which the Church of England professes to admit as authoritative. The first General Council is that of Nicæa in which the Nicene Creed was first propounded. Nicæa is in Asia, and the Council was held in order to condemn Arianism, which originated in Asia. Three hundred and eighteen bishops assembled for the purpose, and most of them were from the East. It was in the year of our Lord 325, and St. Sylvester was Pope at the time. Though the circumstances and sympathies of the Council were so decidedly Eastern, its principal object being to condemn Arianism, an Eastern heresy, yet who presides at the Council, and autho-

izes its decrees? It is the Bishop of Rome, Pope St. Sylvester, who not being able to attend personally, owing to his age and infirmities, deposes a Spanish bishop and two Roman priests to preside in his name. These Legates of the Pope are the first to sign the decrees of the Council,\* even before the Eastern patriarchs who were present; and at the conclusion of the Council the acts are sent to Rome for the approval and confirmation of the Pope. In the year 381 was held the Second General Council, the first of Constantinople. It was not admitted as a General Council, that is to say, its acts and definitions were not held to be of universal authority, until after its close three bishops were sent to Rome to obtain the approval of Pope St. Damasus.† The third General Council was that glorious Council of Ephesus, in which the title of Mother of God was vindicated for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was held in the year of our Lord, 431, and was convened in order to judge Nestorius the Patriarch of Constantinople. St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, and the other Legates of the Pope St. Celestine, presided, and at the conclusion the acts are sent to Rome for the Pope's approval.‡ In the fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon, a very remarkable proof of the Pope's Supremacy is given to us. The Council was held A.D. 451, and condemned the heresy of Eutyches, who denied that there were two natures in Christ. It was convened by the great St. Leo, who was Pope at the time, was presided over by his Legates, and confirmed and approved by him as usual at its conclusion. But observe a striking fact in connexion with this Council. St. Cyril of Alexandria had lately died, and had been succeeded in that Patriarchal See by his Archdeacon Dioscorus, who on his appointment received a letter

\* Labbe, tom. ii. p. 50.

† Labbe, tom. ii. p. 960.

‡ Labbe, tom. iii. p. 614.



from St. Leo confirming his election, and exhorting him to act towards Rome, as St. Mark the first Bishop of Alexandria had acted towards his master St. Peter the Bishop of Rome, and to observe a strict unity in faith and discipline. The caution seemed to be called for, but was not faithfully attended to. Dioscorus, on his own authority ventured to convoke a General Council to deliberate on the Eutychian heresy. For this reason, the Legates of the Pope at the very opening of the Council which St. Leo summoned at Chalcedon, ordered Dioscorus, who was present, to remove from among the Bishops and to sit in the middle of the assembly as a culprit, and in these solemn words he was deposed from his office. "The most holy and blessed Leo, Archbishop of elder Rome, through us, and through the present Synod, with the thrice most blessed and most glorious Apostle Peter, who is the rock and base of the Catholic Church, and the foundation of the orthodox faith, has stripped and deprived him of the episcopal and all priestly dignity."\* Can a more decisive fact than this be required to show what power was claimed, exercised, and universally recognised at the time of St. Leo, and of the fourth General Council? But what ought to make such precedents as I have stated definitive on the matter is this fact. That the Church of England declares in its authorised Book of Homilies, that the four first General Councils belong to the Primitive Church, and that this Primitive Church is to be specially followed as teaching most pure doctrine.† Ought it to require a single additional word on the part of an advocate of Papal Supremacy to be added to such facts? And may I not content myself with saying that this Supremacy of the See of Rome cannot be considered a modern usurpation, if it was

\* Labbe tom. iv. p. 425.

† Book of Homilies. First part of the Homily on Fasting.

what the most undoubted testimony assures us it was, in the first four centuries of the Christian era?

3. After such facts it is scarcely necessary to detain you with any declarations from the Fathers, testifying to the Supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. I need only cite one or two. St. Irenæus, as I have before stated, writing in the second century, urges that for the security of the Faith all ought to have recourse to Rome on account of its more powerful principality. He then enumerates the Popes from St. Peter down to St. Eleutherius the twelfth from him, and adds: "by this order and this succession, both that tradition which is in the Church from the Apostles, and the preaching of the truth have come down to us." St. Cyprian declares that to hold communion with the Pope Cornelius, is the same as to hold communion with the Catholic Church. St. Augustine says strikingly: "You are not believed to hold the true faith of the Catholic Church, if you do not teach that the Roman Faith is to be held;"\* and this great Saint, in the same manner as St. Irenæus, appeals to the unbroken succession in the See of Rome from St. Peter down to his own days, as a proof of the Apostolical faith and power of the See of Rome. To this may be added the testimony of the Greek historian, Sozomen, who declares that it was an Ecclesiastical law, that whatever was done contrary to the sentiment of the Bishop of the Romans, be considered null and void.† To these we may add what must be admitted to be of great force, the conduct and even the taunts of the adversaries of the Church. The Arians, fourteen centuries ago, when condemned for their heresy, just did what the adversaries of the Catholic Church are apt to do now-a-days, they turned upon the Catholics and abusively called them "Romans." So, an Arian, in counselling

\* Apud. Schrader de Unitate Romanâ, p. 7.

† Hist. Eccles. iii. c. 10.



a slower rather than a more violent persecution against the Catholics, used as an argument: "if you put one of them to death by the sword, the Romans will be sure to hold him up as a Martyr." And St. Gregory of Tours, in the sixth century, observes of the Arians: "they always call people of our Religion, Romans."\* Thus, if communion with Rome be a test of orthodoxy, as the Fathers so constantly insist, let those who turn against Rome, and speak reproachfully of her, see whether their very conduct is not an evidence of heterodoxy. These authorities and facts which I have cited are not at all beside our purpose, for they throw great light upon the truth of the prominence of Rome in early ages of the Church, and therefore they show that the Supremacy which Rome claims now has been hers in primitive times, and ought to be admitted as a perpetual evidence of the Apostolical Church. They supply matter for the argument, which we are justified in urging, in defence of the high and noble privilege which belongs to the See of Rome, the Chair of Peter.

III. I feel that we have now matter enough to bring the question to a conclusion, and the conclusion can be no other than that the Papal Supremacy is of Divine institution. That it does exist now is a public fact, as true as that the Queen has temporal Supremacy in her dominions; and that it has existed in every age is perfectly clear from History, and is sufficiently brought home by the facts which I have cited for you. There was a Supremacy held and exercised amongst the Apostles by St. Peter. This was continued in the Church in primitive times; it has been exercised in every age, and it is in daily exercise now. How is it to be accounted for, if not by the fact of its Divine Origin and protection? It is either human or Divine.

It certainly is not the former. For it was established not only without human aid, but in spite of all human opposition; and under precisely similar circumstances it has ever held its high and supernatural position. Let me state an additional fact to all that I have stated, and I keep it until now to show the evident presence of Divine intervention in behalf of this Supremacy. For the first three hundred years of Christianity every Pope was a Martyr. One or two escaped a violent death, by sinking under their labours before the sword had time to reach them: but all suffered from the world, and with scarcely one exception all shed their blood at the hands of their persecutors. Does this savour of human help? Does this tell of a dynasty that has been founded by human means, and propped up by human aids and influence? Or does it not show that something more than human has supported what it first founded, and that the history of the Holy See has always been verifying the prophecy which was uttered at the time of its origin, that the gates of Hell should never prevail against it, because it is defended by Him who says: Have confidence, I have overcome the world?

It is not unusual now-a-days to speak of the Logic of Facts, and to maintain it as a principle, especially when applied against a weak power as the Church seems to be in the eyes of the world, that an accomplished fact, just because it is accomplished,\* must be admitted as right. Apply these principles which the world approves of, to our case, and what ought they not to prove? Is it not a Fact that the Papacy exists, and that it does hold Supreme spiritual jurisdiction over the Catholic world? If it is arrogant and assumes a

\* "Right consists in the material fact.....and all human acts have the force of right," is the 59th of the propositions condemned in the late Encyclical. Why does the world condemn the Papacy, if it is consistent to its principle?

tyrannical and illiberal dominion now, strange that it should have increased and developed in proportion to its distance from its origin, and in spite of the world's constant and violent opposition! But, say the enemies of the Papacy, its downfall is now impending, and it will no longer be able to hold itself up against the independent and enlightened spirit of the day. So said Nero and Domitian; but the Popes have buried the Roman Empire, and are still alive. Let me read you some words of a faithful defender of the Church. "They now see the Church, and they say: She will soon die, and her name will disappear. There will soon be no Christians; they have had their day. And whilst they say this, I see them dying every day; and still the Church keeps alive, and announces the power of God to all succeeding generations."\* Might you not have thought that these words were spoken in our own day by some of those good champions whom even this ungrateful generation has witnessed? But they were spoken fourteen centuries ago, for they are the words of the great St. Augustine. The world is always prophesying the downfall of the Papacy, and therefore of the Church; and by this very means affords a proof of the Apostolicity of the Church, which can say of herself as the Apostles did: *as dying, and behold we live.*\*

And if we were to ask the question, which of the two shows the greatest sign of Divine institution, the Spiritual Supremacy of the Pope, or the Spiritual Supremacy of the Queen, what must be our answer? What was the origin of the Spiritual Supremacy of the reigning sovereign in England? This is a Fact that ought not to be ignored or forgotten, that the Spiritual Supremacy was not a creation on the part of Henry

\* Aug. apud Nicolas, Etudes Phil : Vol. ii, p. 604.

† 2 Cor. vi. 9.

VIII, but it was a substitution. He put himself in the place of the Pope, and made his Clergy swear, that *henceforth* they would pay to him the allegiance which in Spiritual matters they had before paid to the Pope. So that if we were to seek a Scripture origin for the fact of the Supreme Royal Spiritual Supremacy as it is acknowledged in the Church of England, we either can find none at all, or else it must be admitted that it is grounded on St. Peter's Supremacy, transferred by Royal Will and by Act of Parliament, from the Successor of St. Peter to the Successor of King Henry. I have said that no Scripture origin and foundation can be given for such a Supremacy, but I fear that a Scripture precedent *can* be given for it. And a double precedent can be given; one prophetic, and one a fulfilment. Just before the high Priest Caiphas had said, prophesying unconsciously the while, that it was expedient *One Man should die for the people*, the temporizing Chief Priests and Pharisees had said, prophesying also: *all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take possession both of our place and nation.\** And again the same Chief Priests were the ones, who gave out against our suffering Lord that melancholy exclamation: *We have no King but Cæsar.†* Is it not the Church of England that is so much afraid of the Romans; and is it not the same Church which, in combining the Spiritual Supremacy with the temporal in the same sovereign of the country, has only one king and that is Cæsar? How the lesson has been forgotten which that same Jesus had taught those same chief priests, as if anticipating their future cry: that they were to *render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, but to GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S.‡* Was it not for this reason that when our dearest Lord,

\* John. xi. 48.

† John. xix. 15.

‡ Luke, xx. 25.

now in the hands of His enemies, was led for the first time before Pilate, and was accused of refusing to give tribute to Cæsar,\* He answered not the charge, but by His silence taught the distinction. One tribute He did give: another He claimed to be given to Himself. This is the tribute which we have to give to Himself and His Representative. He has incorporated Peter with Himself, and has commanded one tribute to be given in His Name to the Head of His Church. Let us all give it in the submission of Faith, and we shall then show that we acknowledge the Church to be what it really is, the Kingdom of God upon earth.

\* Luke xiii. 2

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXVI.

CREED OF POPE PIUS IV.





## LECTURE XXVI.

### CREED OF POPE PIUS IV.

I am to enter this evening, my dear brethren, upon a new branch of the subjects which it has been and is my purpose to bring before you, and to introduce to you that Profession of Faith universally used by the Catholic Church, and known by the name of the Creed of Pope Pius IV. It is a new branch because hitherto we have been treating upon Articles of a Creed which is professedly accepted in the Church of England, the Apostles' Creed; but now I have to bring before you Articles of a Creed to which, if we may judge from manifest signs, the Church of England bears a very peculiar dislike and objection. To some it may seem that I am entering prematurely upon it, and am leaving the Apostles' Creed unfinished. But having been engaged in the last few Lectures upon questions which concern the Church and her privileges, I think it better at once to introduce this Creed, inasmuch as I shall have to allude to principles which at present are more freshly impressed upon your minds. And the most practical articles which remain of the Apostles' Creed will be very fittingly treated of in our considerations upon the Creed of Pope Pius IV., especially the Articles which tell us of the Communion of Saints and the Forgiveness of Sins. For, as we shall see in due time in neither of these will or can there be any reality unless they are accepted as the Catholic Church develops them for us in the Creed of Pope Pius. This evening I will give you a little History of the Creed, state its substance,

and defend the general principle; and on the following Sundays we will attend to its details.

I. The Creed of Pope Pius IV. is in reality the Creed of the Council of Trent. For the Creed was in substance drawn up by the Council, in which the matter of each of the Articles was fully discussed and carefully defined; and after the conclusion of the Council it was promulgated by Pius IV. The Council of Trent, which so far is the last of the General Councils of the Church, was called in the middle of the sixteenth century. In order to remedy troubles and evils, and to avert dangers, the Church had recourse to this means which she had so often practised before, and summoned through the authority of the Pope all the Bishops of the world to join together in deliberation and prayer. Three causes were stated in the Bull of Convocation: the defence of the Faith against new and encroaching errors; the establishment of peace amongst the Christian princes who were at the time in discord; and the restoration of discipline which was suffering from the circumstances of the time. Every General Council has been called for some specific object; and in order to ascertain the infallible judgment of the Church, and to devise means for carrying out the object, Bishops are called throughout the world to assemble under the presidency of the Pope, just in the same manner as in the Acts of the Apostles we read that the Apostles assembled under St. Peter, to legislate upon the question which then arose, and to promulgate what seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to the united Episcopate. As a rule those Bishops have been found to attend most numerous, whose provinces or countries have been affected by the matters under consideration. Of the seventeen General Councils which had been held before the Council of Trent, the eight first had been held in the East, the nine last in the West. And though in the Eastern Councils Eastern

Bishops preponderated, and Western Bishops in the Western Councils, yet two circumstances were always the same in all these Councils whether of the East or West; namely, that the Pope presided or approved, confirmed and promulgated the Decrees, and that when so sanctioned they were submitted to by the whole of Christendom.

Trent was an European and Western General Council; for the errors which it had to combat, and the dangers which it had to guard against were unknown and unfelt in the East. European bishops principally attended. It was not one error but many that had to be examined and condemned. For the very principle of Faith, the teaching and ruling authority of the Church, had been questioned and denied, and no wonder that when the foundation was thus uprooted, that the whole superstructure came falling down in ruin, and that almost every Article of Faith had met an express opposition. Not Faith only but Practice was contradicted; the efficacy of the Sacraments was impugned; charity to the dead was opposed; and all that the venerable sanction of Fathers and Saints had proved to be true and had made to be dear to the Church, was attempted to be overthrown by those whose want of all principle was a sufficient evidence of their absence of Faith, and whose mode of life and conduct gave ample proof of their absence of practical morality. Faith, Practice, and Discipline had therefore to be regulated and defined, and this was the work which the Council had to achieve.

Luther, who had for some years been in open rebellion against an authority which he had at one time reverently obeyed, had, when condemned by Pope Leo X., not at once denied the authority of the Pope in matters of Faith, but appealed to a future Pope who might be better informed, thus of course making Papal authority to be only an abstract right which

might in practice be resisted. And seeing that this could avail nothing, and that he could not escape the condemnation which his errors deserved, he appealed from the Pope to a General Council. Thus, in theory at least, he admitted the authority of such a Council to be definitive and supreme. Such an appeal could not be listened to, for it did not exist, being against the universal practice of the Christian Church. Nor even, if the Pope had wished it, could a General Council at that time be conveniently assembled, owing to the great troubles and wars which were just then prevailing. Circumstances, however, did make one possible a little later, and urged by many reasons, Pope Paul III. summoned the Bishops of the universe to convene in the year 1545.

The place chosen for the Council, the eighteenth General Council of the Church, was Trent, a city in the Tyrol. It commenced under Paul III., was continued under Julius III., and after some interruptions was concluded under Pius IV. in the year 1563, eighteen years after its commencement. It was presided over by the Pope's Legates, one of whose number was our own Cardinal Pole. During its course it held twenty-five Sessions or greater meetings, and published Decrees and Canons which were drawn up after great and patient prayer and deliberation, and very full discussion. Various Bishops assisted at various times, and at the end 255 signed the Decrees, there not being a single dissentient voice among all that were present. There were in attendance Bishops from Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Greece, &c. England was represented by one surviving faithful Bishop, Dr. Godwell, Bishop of St. Asaph, and Ireland by an Archbishop and two Bishops. The Decrees were as usual submitted to Pope Pius for his approval, and in the year 1564, the year immediately succeeding the conclusion of the Council, he drew up and promulgated the Creed,

which is consequently known by the name of the Creed of Pope Pius IV.

Observe, what is very worthy of notice, the length of time that was devoted to this important Council, the patience with which its deliberations were conducted, and the full opportunity which was thus given of investigating all the questions which were brought under consideration. The unanimity of the Bishops too is a most noticeable circumstance, especially when it is borne in mind how strongly national feelings and prejudices were at that time being acted upon in the existing disturbed state of Europe, when some of the leading countries were at war with each other. How different must be the spirit which animates the Catholic Church, when two hundred and fifty-five bishops assembled together from different countries are found to be perfectly in harmony and unanimous in matters of Faith and Discipline, from that which recent events have shown to be the spirit of the Church established in this kingdom, where we have witnessed that in a meeting of ten bishops in deliberating upon the condemnation of a book\* which is most undoubtedly of a sceptical and infidel character, five were found to vote upon one side and five on the other! Nor must we fail to attend to the fact of the acceptation of the Decrees of the Council by the Catholic Church spread throughout the world. The Council was submitted to then, it is accepted and submitted to now; and just in the same manner as now after the lapse of fifteen hundred years we acknowledge the Decrees of the Council of Nicæa to be as fresh and true as if they had been passed but yesterday, so when fifteen hundred years shall have elapsed after the Council of Trent, its decrees will still be what they were at the conclusion of the Council and what they are now, the voice of the infallible Church, and

therefore the guide for the obedience of Christendom. Again; in matters of Faith, as we shall see, the Council defined nothing new. Whatever was defined was but the expression of the mind of the Church as it has been from the very beginning. The inspired Word of God, the testimony of the Fathers, the clear feeling and belief of antiquity were adduced in support of every decision; and thus all that the Church did, by the voice of the Council, was to declare what was the old Faith once delivered to the Saints, and to be held to the consummation of the world. And, notwithstanding the objections and false representations that have been made regarding the Articles which the Creed of the Council has appended to the Council of Nicæa, we shall see in due course that each one expresses the Faith and practice which have been held in the Church from the very beginning.

II. But it is time for me to call your attention to the Profession of Faith, which the Creed of the Council of Trent or of Pope Pius IV. contains. This Creed is divisible into two parts. The first part is the Nicene Creed; the second part contains an explicit declaration of Faith in all those truths which the heresies of the time had questioned or denied. In repeating the Nicene Creed, the Church at Trent showed that she was the same as she had been at Nicæa, and she observed the law which she had made in her earliest times, that the Creed of Nicæa was to be the perpetual Creed of the Church. Therefore she is not afraid to append to it those other declarations which are perfectly in harmony with that Creed, but which the denial of later times urged her to declare so explicitly. The additional declarations are the following.

“I most steadfastly admit and embrace Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

“I also admit the Holy Scriptures according to that

sense which our Holy Mother the Church has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures: Neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

“I also profess that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one. To wit, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order and Matrimony; and that they confer Grace; and that of these, Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the received and approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the aforesaid Sacraments.

“I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy Council of Trent, concerning Original Sin and Justification.

“I profess likewise that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood; which conversion the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation. I also confess that under either kind alone Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament.

“I constantly hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

“Likewise that the Saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invoked, and that they



offer prayers to God for us, and that their Relics are to be had in veneration.

“I most firmly assert that the Images of Christ, of the Mother of God ever Virgin, and also of other Saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration is to be given to them.

“I also affirm that the Power of Indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

“I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church for the Mother and Mistress of all Churches, and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, Successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ.

“I likewise undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the Sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent. And I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematized.”

These declarations include some Articles of Faith which I have already explained and defended, and to which I need not return, namely, the Supremacy of the See of Rome, and the infallible authority of the Church. But they also state many truths to which I have not yet alluded, and which it will be most important for me to lay before you. This I shall do most satisfactorily and conveniently, I believe, if I treat on the following subjects and in the following order. 1. Tradition as entering into the Rule of Faith. 2. Church and Scripture. 3. The Sacramental System, in which I shall especially dwell upon the Blessed Eucharist and the Sacrament of Penance; including in the former the Sacrifice of the Mass, and Communion under one kind, and in the latter the doctrine of Indulgences. 4. The Catholic Doctrine of Justification. 5. Purgatory, and

Prayers for the dead. 6. The Honour and Invocation of Saints. 7. Respect due to Images and Relics. Thus, there is a large field open before us, but I trust, with the blessing of God, and with your patience, to do what is the duty of a teacher, and to explain to you what it so deeply concerns you to know and to practise.

III. This Profession of Faith does not occur in your ordinary Prayer-books, nor, like the other Creeds, is it used in the Liturgy of the Church. But it is universally adopted by the Church as a test of orthodoxy, is required to be professed by Ecclesiastical Superiors when placed in certain responsible situations, and it is always required to be professed also by converts, after they have gone through their course of instruction, and are being admitted into the Church. For, as I shall show to you, the declarations are all directed against the errors of modern heresy, and are nothing more than a profession of the Faith of our ancestors ever since the time of the Apostles. Upon all these Articles you shall have *positive* and not mere *negative* instructions, and you shall see how consistent the Church is to her office of guide and teacher, and what antidotes she provides for the poison of error. Ever watchful and solicitous over the deposit of Faith which has been entrusted to her, when a single truth is attacked, she is filled with fire like St. Paul, and speaks out openly and definitively. Hers is no uncertain and wavering sound, but she speaks so as to be understood and obeyed by all her children. My desire is to speak in her name, and to instruct you as she would wish you to be instructed in these important and most practical truths. As I told you at the very commencement of our course, I tell you now, that I seek not controversy, but only wish to explain what our own Faith is, and to defend the truth against the attacks which have been aimed at it.

When those who are separated from the Catholic

Church attempt, as we so often find them attempting, to explain our principles, and hold up the declarations in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. for a theme to dilate upon, they call the doctrines here defined, Distinctive doctrines of the Church of Rome. We accept the term, and admit that they are distinctive; for they serve to distinguish Orthodoxy from Heresy, just in the same manner as the Nicene Creed was distinctive in the days when Arius denied the Divinity of our Lord. And when it is pretended that, because the Creed was promulgated but three hundred years ago, the doctrines which it defines are novelties, there is a studied concealment or a total ignorance of that principle which we are always upholding, that the Church never defines *new doctrines*, but only sends forth *new definitions* of old doctrines, whenever circumstances call upon her to do so. If the Arians had never arisen to deny the oneness of substance between the Father and the Son, the Church would not have found it necessary to expand the Apostles' Creed into the form which is assumed in the Nicene Creed. And if more modern Heretics had not broken away from the Unity of the Church, and denied those truths which the Church has held from the very beginning, the Council of Trent would not have found it necessary to define so precisely what the Fathers have always taught, or to anathematize so solemnly what modern heresy has not been ashamed to propound. The Creed of Pope Pius IV. then, is not a new Creed, but a new declaration of the old Faith. It is a manifestation of the life and watchfulness of the Church, and proves that she is consistent to what she always claims, that she has the power to define and to decide in the controversies of Faith, as securely now as on the very day of Pentecost.

And which process, do you think, is most likely to give us certainty, and to secure Faith for us, that which the Apostles themselves followed and which the

Catholic Church has ever followed, or that in which the sound Apostolical form is abandoned, and which allows each individual to be his own judge, instead of being a child and disciple of the Church? When the Apostles wished to define in a matter of controversy, they assembled together in their Council of Jerusalem, and after prayer and deliberation sent forth their authoritative declaration which seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to themselves. And when somewhat later, heresies became bold, and the Divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost were assailed, the Church in her venerable early Councils of Nicæa, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, showed herself to be still animated with the same Holy Spirit, and sent forth decrees, which even the Church of England professes to be expressive of pure doctrine. The principle which was acted upon in those primitive days was, that the Private Judgment of the individual must submit to the authoritative voice of the Church. The Church which was infallible then, is for the same reason infallible now ; and as it is the same obedient spirit of children which made the faithful accept the decrees which emanated from her in the early centuries, and makes us to accept them now, so the same disloyal and self-willed feeling animates those, who now-a-days emulate the disobedience of early heretics, who would not hear the Church, and therefore became cast away. Would that I could even in one instruction let you see the whole beauty and consistency of what the Church teaches in the Creed which I am about to explain to you ! But it is given to God alone thus by one single act, and through one word, to infuse Faith into the soul, and to warm it with love. But it will be in patience and in submissiveness to His will, and in a desire to save our own souls, that we shall examine what so deeply concerns us. And our prayer shall constantly be, that we may know and practise what God has

vouchsafed to reveal, and that we may not allow Him to have spoken in vain. For if He has revealed truths which it is His Will that we should know by the very fact of His having revealed them; if He has placed means at our disposal, which on that very account He wishes us to adopt; if He has vouchsafed, in His immense goodness, to interest Himself so intimately about those souls which He has made to His own Image, and which He destines for a happy eternity,—why should not we also enter into His views, especially when so much is at issue? Be determined then, that, come what will, you will obey His call, and submit to that Church which speaks in His Name. Thus alone will you find security, and be preserved from being tossed about by every wind of false doctrine; and under this guidance you will safely find your way to Heaven. For it is in order to give His Sanction to all the Creeds of the Church that our dear Lord says, Whoever believes on her teaching shall be saved: but whoever does not believe shall be condemned.







**LECTURES**  
**ON**  
**CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.**

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**LECTURE XXVII.**

**TRADITION.**



## LECTURE XXVII.

### TRADITION.

*“I most steadfastly admit and embrace Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.”*

This is the first of the special declarations contained in the Creed of Pope Pius IV., which is now under consideration. It is a declaration clear, positive and unhesitating, like all those which emanate from the Catholic Church. For as it is her duty to *teach*, she conveys her lessons and truths in a tangible and comprehensible form; and as it is her gift and privilege to teach without fear or danger of error, she speaks as she feels, with confidence and authority. This declaration of an admission of Tradition into our Rule of Faith, is a point upon which those in this country who are separated from the Church of Rome break with us. Here it is in reality that our Rules differ. A Church which has received a divine commission to teach, is not obliged to show a written warrant for every truth which she communicates. She cannot teach anything except what is in the *Word* of God committed to her; but it is not necessary that this word be *written*. But a Church which has no authority to teach, which is nothing but a reader and not a teacher, can only use the written record which she thinks comes from God, and to that her whole office and jurisdiction is limited and restrained. One, the teaching Church, is the Church of the Apostles: the other is one which did not exist and could not have existed in their days. I have so often brought this before you, and have proved it

in so many ways, that I must now, to save time, simply state what you must admit to be true of the Church of the Apostles. It was sent to teach; and those to whom the Apostles preached, were commanded to submit to this teaching, at the peril of salvation. The only Scripture they had was the Old Testament; and the glorious truths contained now in the New Testament were at that time but Tradition, that is to say, were unwritten. The Rule of Faith, then, amongst the Apostles, was Scripture and Tradition, the written and the unwritten word of God. The Church of Christ must be Apostolical, and her Rule of Faith must be and is the same now as it was in the time of the Apostles.

I. In order to remove all misapprehension and that I may be clearly understood, let me explain what is meant by Tradition, as entering into our Rule of Faith. And first of all let me tell you what it is not. It is not the word of man. For the mere word of man never can serve as the motive for Divine Faith: such belief would only be human.—Nor is it simply the word of the Church. For the Church cannot devise, and never has pretended to devise, new Articles of Faith. Ecclesiastical Traditions concern Discipline and not Faith; but we are of course bound to observe these Traditions, because the Church is the regulator of Discipline, as well as the guardian of Faith.—Nor is the Tradition of which we are here speaking merely the word of the Apostles. Because the Apostles were not to teach anything of their own, but only what was commissioned to them. So St. Paul declared to the Thessalonians, as we have so often seen, that his word was not the word of man, but indeed the Word of God. Thus, though the Church has authority in matters of Faith, it is only over the word of God that she has such authority, as she has been appointed by God as the Teacher of His Word, and she is the means by

which we are to know infallibly what it is that God has revealed. Such then is what Divine Tradition is not. It is not the mere word of man ; it is not the mere word of the Church : it is not the mere word of the Apostles. Now let us see what it is.

Divine Tradition, which with Scripture forms the Catholic Rule of Faith, is *the unwritten Word of God*. Mind, we say the *Word of God* ; and therefore it is, that whatever it declares is of Faith, because it supplies the motive of Faith, which is the Truthfulness of God. And when we say *unwritten*, we mean, unrecorded by any inspired writer. This is the difference between Scripture and Tradition. They both agree in being the Word of God ; but Scripture is that Word written down by a writer specially inspired for the purpose ; and Tradition is that Word not thus written but handed down by authorized teachers. The words of St. Paul to Timothy exactly express the meaning of Tradition, when he says : *The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men who shall be fit to teach others also.\** Many of these Traditions have in process of time been written down, and are to be found in the works of the Fathers or in the Decrees of Popes and Councils ; but they are still but Traditions, because they are not written by those who have been divinely inspired to write, and are but expressions of the living voice of the Church. Divine Traditions are called by the Council of Trent,† those Traditions, “ which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves at the dictation of the Holy Ghost, have come down even unto us, transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand.” These the Council declares, are to be accepted with equal affection of piety and reverence as the

\* 2 Tim. ii. 2.

† Sess. iv.

Scriptures, for the very reason that they are equally the Word of God.

This declaration of the Council, which was made towards its commencement, and was therefore promulgated after many years' deliberation had passed over, led to an interesting and instructive discussion amongst the Fathers assembled at Trent. When it was proposed to decree that, in accordance with the universal precedent of antiquity, Scripture and Tradition should be received with an equal affection of piety and reverence, it was suggested that this decree might be misunderstood, as placing every truth, whether revealed or not, on a level. But a learned Bishop\* who had preached the opening sermon, clearly defined what was meant by the Decree, and laid down the principle, that it was not the fact of writing which made a truth to be the word of God, but that it was equally His Word whether it was written or not. It was an accidental, not an essential, circumstance, that some truths were handed down in writing, and others by word of mouth. But as they were both from God they were equally true, and as they were both delivered to the Apostles and by them handed down to us, they came from the same authority, and are therefore to be treated and received with the same piety and reverence. For instance, the Mystery of the Incarnation was perfectly true, even before it was written down by an inspired writer; and those who never saw its written record, believed it as firmly as we do who know it from Scripture. Truths, which are true in themselves, become true to us, when they are made known to us by an authorized source; but if there are two authorized sources, we must accept the truth when either brings it home to us. One is a written source, the other unwritten. It is not the writing, then, which makes

\* Musso, Bishop of Bitonto.

facts *true*, but it makes us *know* them. If we could know them any other way, they would be equally true. So in the Apostles' time many truths were not known by writing, but by word of mouth. And if an assurance were given, that teachers should be secured from error as well as writers, such an unwritten testimony must be accepted as from God. Thus we quite understand what St. Paul meant when he said to the Thessalonians; *Stand fast, brethren, and hold the traditions which you have learnt, whether by word, or by our epistle.\**

We cannot imagine that any one will deny that every truth deserves to be accepted with the confidence and reverence that is due to its author and source. If a fact is communicated to us by a person of undoubted truthfulness, and one who has had full means for ascertaining the truth of the statement which he makes to us, and to which he pledges his word of honour, we accept the statement and on such testimony cannot refuse it. If the person who tells us a fact, is on the other hand one who has been known to be easily deceived, and to be by no means cautious or credible, we doubt what he tells us, and should not like to stake our own character by being answerable for his statement. When God speaks, of course we believe whatever He says, because He is the sovereign truth. If an Apostle speaks and assures us that what he says, he declares on the authority of God, we accept it not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the Word of God, and believe it as of Divine Faith. If the Church speaks, and declares that she speaks by virtue of her Divine Office, as an authorized messenger from God, and is telling us what was revealed to her on the great day of Pentecost, we accept her statement as the word of God, and know that when we hear the Church we hear God Himself, for He has said so. It is for this reason, then, and through consistency to our

\* 2 Thess. ii. 15.



principle, that we “most steadfastly admit and embrace Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions.”

II. The doctrine which we defend is denied by the Protestant Church, which in the sixth of the Thirty-Nine Articles, declares that “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or to be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation.” This really is a virtual denial of the Church’s office, and not only denies the teaching authority of the Church, but it virtually denies Scripture itself, inasmuch as it denies the existence of that authority by which alone the inspiration of Scripture, and the Canon of Scripture are made known to us. We maintain the necessity of Tradition, or of a living teaching authority, in order to bring home to us many truths which Scripture alone does not teach. Let me show to you how reasonable the Catholic system is, and how it alone can give to us a security for Faith in many articles of belief.

1. The inspiration of Scripture is an article of Faith, and yet it cannot be proved from Scripture. It is not possible on principle, neither is it the case as a fact, that any one can satisfy himself or has satisfied himself about the inspiration of Scripture from the inward testimony of Scripture. It is not possible on principle. For how can you prove the inspiration of Scripture from Scripture, if you have not the Scripture to prove it from? But if you have it, how and where did you get it? Who authorized the version which you used, when you first had the knowledge of its inspiration brought home to you? And as a fact, is it not the case that some one or other, a parent, a master, or a minister placed the Scriptures in your hands and taught you to venerate it as the Word of God? You did not make out its inspiration from your own reading. You

read it as the Bible, and believed in its inspiration before you read it. Therefore it is not the Scripture which can teach its own inspiration : nor as a fact in any case which can be cited or verified, has it ever done so. In believing the inspiration of Scripture upon a testimony and an authority external to itself, you have admitted the principle and the existence of Tradition, or of some means besides Scripture by which an Article of Faith can be brought home to you. Go back to your childhood, and see whether you were not taught this truth, and whether you did not believe it when taught. How do your own children know it? And how does the whole kingdom accept the inspiration of the Scripture, and of each of the books contained in it? Self-flatterers may say that they can arrive at this knowledge by a special light vouchsafed to them. St. Augustine did not pretend to this, but spoke the language of Faith as well as of Reason, when he said : " I could not believe the Gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church were my motive ;" that is to say unless Tradition existed to teach me. This is our process, and the only satisfactory one.

2. Besides the inspiration and Canon of Scripture there are other dogmas of immense importance which cannot be known by Scripture alone, without Tradition. With regard to the first of the Sacraments, Baptism, there are practical questions which can be decided only by the voice and authority of Tradition. When in the third Century, in the time of Pope St. Stephen and St. Cyprian, there arose a controversy upon the validity of Baptism when administered by Heretics, the ground of St. Stephen's decision in favour of the validity was the authority of Tradition, against which he declared that there should be no innovation. Such Baptism is undoubtedly held to be valid in the Church of England, and yet how can the validity be proved independently of Tradition? St. Augustine declared that his reason

for believing this truth was the declaration of the Church, and that "the custom of the Church was the only plea that was opposed to those who wished to introduce a novelty."\* And Infant Baptism, which the 27th of the 39 Articles declares ought to be retained in the Church, is a practice for which we must depend on the traditional custom of the Church. So says Origen: "The Church has received the Tradition from the Apostles of giving Baptism even to infants."† And St. Augustine, speaking of this same practice, says: "This the Church has always held and always maintained; this she has received from the Faith of our ancestors; this she guards perseveringly even to the end."‡ Certainly if the Anabaptists maintain their practice of administering Baptism only to adults, those who take Scripture as their only Rule, and reject Tradition, will find it hard to give a satisfactory reason for condemning and rejecting their practice.

3. Then let us examine how, without Tradition, can the Church of England justify the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. Certainly that Commandment: *Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day*, is a solemn injunction, and Almighty God declares that the day which He fixed was the Seventh day, namely, Saturday, not the first day or Sunday, which is now observed as the Sabbath. Our Blessed Lord kept the Sabbath on the seventh day; and after His Death, St. Luke particularly speaks of the disciples having *rested on the Sabbath-day according to the Commandment*.§ Is this observance of the Sabbath on which the Protestant Church even prides itself, a matter of importance or not? Can it be said that one day is as good as

\* Aug. L. 2 de Bapt. c. 9.

† Orig. in cap. vi. Ep. ad Rom.

‡ Aug. Serm. 10 de Verb. Apost.

§ Luke, xxiii, 56.

another, and that we enter into the mind of God, by keeping the first day sacred as well as if we thus kept the seventh day? God has vouchsafed even to give His reason for ordering the rest of the seventh day, *for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*\* That reason will not hold good for the Sunday, especially as the change really makes the Saturday, the old Sabbath, the hardest working-day of the seven instead of its being a day of rest. Still our adversaries on the day on which they worship God so demurely, are really an authority against themselves, and exhibit with the greatest solemnity, that their principle is one thing and their practice another. Here again, we have no difficulty. Our principle and our practice is to do what the Church bids, and if in consequence of the Resurrection of our Lord and the great event of Pentecost, and to show the change from the Old to the New Law, she has transferred the Sabbath, we gladly obey her living voice, and for our authority we point to a principle which we admit, and that principle is Tradition.

The mode adopted by our dear Saviour, and followed under His guidance by the Apostles, was clearly, as we have oftentimes insisted, the very same as is now practised in the Catholic Church. Faith came by hearing, not by reading. Therefore Scripture was not essential; nor was it indeed in actual existence, except as far as the Old Testament was concerned; for of course the New Testament was not written till after Christianity had made some progress. All the Apostles taught, and were sent to teach; very few of them, only five, wrote in the inspired Volume. Therefore their mode was the Traditional mode; and there is no authority for saying that this mode was ever to be

\* Exod. xx, 11.

changed. This principle cannot be urged against us, as if it would follow hence that Scripture was not to be admitted at all into our Rule of Faith. We admit Scripture, but we admit it on the authority of Tradition, without which we could not possibly know what is Scripture, or what is its sense. But to this I shall have to return in our next Lecture.

And all antiquity is unanimous in admitting the authority of Tradition. On this point, as the Council of Trent declares, we follow the example of the Orthodox Fathers. St. Ignatius, the Martyr, immediately after the Apostles' time, is described as, when being conducted to martyrdom, exhorting the Churches through which he passed, to stand firm to the Tradition of the Apostles. St. Irenæus, a little later, speaks of challenging heretics to prove their doctrines by that Tradition which is from the Apostles, which is preserved in the Churches through the succession of the priesthood. And the great Apologist Tertullian, speaking upon practices which he was defending, says: "For these and such like rules, if thou requirest a law in the Scriptures, thou wilt not find one. Tradition will be pleaded to thee, as originating, custom as confirming, and faith as observing them."\* And St. Augustine speaking on that practical point, on which we have already cited here, of the validity of Baptism administered by heretics, says: "This practice, I believe, comes from Apostolical Tradition: for there are many things which are not found in the writings of the Apostles, but which because they are observed throughout the Universal Church, are believed to have been transmitted and commended by none others than the Apostles themselves."† We might even upon this point appeal to the conduct of our adversaries, who, in defence of their principle, have sometimes strangely quoted the

\* Tert. de Corona.

† Lib. 2 de Bapt.

authority of antiquity. They have appealed to Tradition, to show that there is no Tradition. And they have used this argument, not simply as an argument against us on our own principles, but as a positive one on their own side. And of course by this very fact they admit what they deny. For if the language of the Fathers of antiquity can prove anything for them, then they are allowing that such testimony is of value, and they thus admit our principle.

III. But there are one or two objections which are brought against our principle, but which it will require only a moment's reflection to answer. As we maintain that Scripture and Tradition are both the Word of God, we of course maintain that there is no antagonism between them, and therefore Scripture cannot condemn Tradition, or else God would be condemning His own holy Word, which far be it from us ever to think possible! The words of our dear Lord in Matt. xv. are sometimes adduced, in which He condemns the Scribes and Pharisees for their too fond adherence to their traditions, and says to them: *Why do you also transgress the Commandment of God for your tradition?*\*\* How can these words with any consistency or reason be brought against us? What is our definition of Tradition? We have defined it *the unwritten Word of God*. Therefore it is not human, as those traditions were to which the Pharisees clung in their puritanical outward observance, one of which human observances our Lord was then showing that He did not value. Because our blessed Lord condemned, or censured, or disapproved of some human traditions, and a servile clinging to them, calling them as they really were only human, can we jump to the conclusion that He condemned even Divine traditions? The words with which St. John concludes the Book of his Revelations are also cited against us.

\* Matt. xv. 3.



He says: *I testify to every one who heareth the words of the prophecy of this Book; If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book.\** This objection again assumes that what refers to only one Book of Scripture is to be referred to the whole. Do the objectors remember that precisely similar words occur in Deuteronomy iv. 2? And if the words mean what they are forced into meaning by those who object them, they would have forbidden the whole of the New Testament, if in Deuteronomy they are to be accepted in the spirit of the objectors; and they would forbid the Gospel of St. John, which was most certainly written after the Apocalypse. And from the principle on which we have all along insisted, it cannot be denied that Tradition adds nothing, in the way of contradiction, to the Scripture, for Tradition is the Word of God, and God cannot contradict Himself. And as a fact, there are most certainly changes or additions which Protestants admit equally with ourselves, for which a warrant in Scripture alone cannot be found, as we have already shown. To us, such matters are no difficulty, for our principle justifies them: but how do the objectors answer the difficulty for themselves, when they have added (in their own meaning) the obligation of the Sunday to the law of God?

But, really, what need of more on a matter so evident! Let us come to the point, and put the question practically. Could we have known clearly what God wishes us to believe and to practise upon every point, unless the voice of our Fathers had been our guide and assistance? As a fact, do we know the great truth of the Canon and Inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, independently of that venerable Tradition which assures us of this comforting reality? And as a Fact again, do we know that we are justified in keeping the Sunday



as the holy day for rest, and the special worship of God, without our falling back upon a principle that we do what we have been taught, but what is not commanded to us by any injunction in the written Word. You act, therefore, on Tradition: and as reasonable beings, and men of principle, your duty is to justify what you do in such sacred, solemn and awful duties between yourself and God, by a motive which will be a guarantee to you that you are not going against your duty. Let your *service*, as St. Paul orders, be *reasonable*;\* and it will be so only then when your practice does not afford a contradiction to your principle, by your doing in reality what in words you profess to condemn. Do not, then, reject Tradition, to which you owe so much. Remember it is the Word of God, spoken to you through His own representative; and in disobeying the Church which has treasured up His Word for you, you are giving up your loyalty to God Himself. The Church which gives you the Bible gives you everything: and if she does not and cannot err in giving you what God has entrusted to her, do not doubt her in her other dealings with you. Accept her word as the word of God, for it is such, inasmuch as she speaks in His name, and with His sanction. Thus only can you have that certainty which constitutes Faith; and thus only can you show that you agree with the apostle, who, in his inspired words, assures us that the Church is *the pillar and ground of the Truth*.†

\* Rom. xii. 1.

† 1 Tim. iii. 15.



LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXVIII.

CHURCH AND SCRIPTURE.



## LECTURE XXVIII

### CHURCH AND SCRIPTURE.

*"I also admit the Holy Scriptures according to that sense which our Holy Mother, the Church, hath held and doth hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures. Neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."*

This is the second of the special declarations of the Creed of Pope Pius IV., given forth like the first declaration, clearly and unhesitatingly. And most important is it that it should be so given forth, for it affects the very groundwork of Faith. To us who accept the Church as the authorized messenger and representative of God, endowed now, as she was in the days of the Apostles, with a supreme infallible teaching authority, this declaration merely tells of a fact, that we receive the Scriptures from her, and that she is to serve as our Teacher here, as everywhere else. To others, who deny the authority of the Church to be infallible if they allow her any authority whatever, this declaration affords an opportunity for comparing with us, in their mode of dealing with the inspiration and interpretation of the Written Word of God. I have then a twofold duty to perform ; and I will perform it as clearly and as briefly as I can. I have to show to you the Catholic mode of dealing with the Sacred Scriptures : a mode, simple, consistent, reasonable, and recommending itself

to the acceptation of the common sense of mankind. And I shall have to show the Protestant mode, which I am convinced you will find to be unpractical, inconsistent, and most unreasonable: a mode subversive of the very Scriptures, because it cannot possibly bring home to the mind a knowledge of their inspiration, and dangerous and destructive in the very use and application of the Scriptures, because it is destructive of that Unity which is an evidence of Truth and a Mark of the Church of Christ.

I. My first duty is to lay before you the doctrine of the Catholic Church on the connexion between the Church and Scripture. And I would commence by observing that the declaration of the Council of Trent, or of the Creed of Pope Pius, upon this subject, which I have cited for you was also, like the one upon Tradition, drawn up towards the commencement of the Council, and was therefore promulgated after an opportunity had been afforded of many years' deliberation. So that when the 255 Bishops signed the decree, and when the Catholic Church accepted it, it was not a precipitate or premature act on the part either of the Council or of the Catholic world. It was only indeed a declaration of what the Church had always acted upon, and was but an expression of the habit and instinct of Catholic souls. When we approach the subject of the Sacred Scriptures, there are three practical points which must be considered, and upon all these the Catholic Church has a principle and a practice which is convincing and satisfactory. There is the point of the Canon of Scripture, the Inspiration of Scripture, and the Interpretation of Scripture. The general principle that the Church has an infallible authority in all matters of Faith, sets us quite at rest upon these questions, and gives us no trouble or anxiety.

1. By the *Canon* of Scripture, we mean the list or

collection of books which form the Bible, or inspired Book. Inspired books are therefore called also Canonical. The Council of Trent did not really go into the question of the Canon, but repeated solemnly the declaration which had been made in the Council of Florence, and gave the list which forms the Vulgate edition. The Protestant Canon is different from ours, and omits several Books which the Church declares to be inspired. How are we to know which is the right Canon? It is certainly a very important question, and its importance need not be urged upon those who profess a veneration for the Written Word of God. We have not the slightest difficulty. We always fall back upon our principle. The Church which is our guide in matters of Faith, which is *the pillar and ground of the Truth*, gives us the Bible, assures us that it is the very Word of God, and in her authoritative language declares: If any one receive not as sacred and canonical the said Books entire with all their parts, let him be anathema. We are bound to hear the Church under pain of becoming as heathens and publicans; we do hear her; we receive what she so solemnly tells us, and here is our justification and mode of knowing the Canon, and nobody can accuse us of being inconsistent and unreasonable in our process.

2. Next with regard to the mode of proving the *Inspiration* of any book. Here again our principle sets us right and removes all doubt. Each individual is not required to make the investigation, but having accepted the Church as his teacher, he does not doubt her authority or pretend to overrule her judgment, but believes any book to be inspired which the Church declares to be so. The most learned Divine and the simplest child have the same process, believe the same, and for the same motive. St. Epiphanius said: "The Catholic Church holds the first place in everything." And therefore we commence our searching into the fact



of the inspiration of any book, with the question: what does the Church say? We commence it, I say, and we conclude it too with that question. And so St. Augustine expressed the motive of believing the inspiration of Scripture, which exists with every Catholic, when he said: "I could not believe the Gospel, unless the authority of the Catholic Church were my motive for so doing." Nor does this process involve anything that is unreasonable, and that will not stand the test of close examination. In other words, we do not, as is some times objected, prove the Church by the Scripture, and then go back and prove the Scripture by the Church, which would be an illegitimate way of arguing. Our principle is, and the fact is, that the Church comes before the Scripture, and we must satisfy ourselves upon the authority of the Church independently of the inspiration of Scripture. I say, that the fact is that the Church comes before the Scripture. Our Blessed Lord founded the Church Himself, before a word of the Scripture of the New Testament was written, and therefore before the Bible existed as a complete book. The Apostles preached before they wrote, and therefore their mode of proving their authority and the divinity of their Mission, was not by pointing to a written authority, but by other proofs and evidences which they had at hand. And so do we prove the Church's authority quite independently of the inspiration of Scripture. The Church is a reality and a fact whose existence is brought home to us by many arguments. I have lately been proving to you the truth of the Catholic Church from the marks given to us in the Nicene Creed; and if there is on earth now an institution which is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolical, and which is always manifesting its divinity of origin and existence by its works, its sufferings, its labour and its success; there is one proof of its being the messenger of God, and having a support which is not human or

worldly, inasmuch as it perseveres in spite of man and the world. And we feel and know the necessity of some infallible teaching authority, such as the Church affords; we feel it from the very nature of man who is led by teaching, and from the very nature of truth which is thus brought home to the human soul. And if we do use the Scriptures in our proof, we use them as an argument with those who admit their inspiration; or we quite abstract from their inspiration, and using them merely as an historical work, we find how they too tell us of that Church which is so great a reality. The very arguments by which we prove the Divinity of the Christian Religion to an unbeliever, who would not accept evidence from Scripture, prove also the existence of the Church; for I have elsewhere shown to you that strictly we make Christianity and the Church identical, and whatever proves Christianity proves the Church.\* Christianity is the abstract, and the Church is the concrete reality. So, as the Church is before the Scripture both in reason, in fact, and in time, we satisfy ourselves about her existence and authority, and upon her word which cannot deceive us, we believe the inspiration of Scripture.

3. As we accept the Canon and the Inspiration of Scripture on the authority of the Church, so do we accept the *Interpretation* on the same authority. For we believe that the same representative of God who tells us that God has spoken, tells us what God meant when He did speak; in other words we maintain that it belongs to the Church to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Scripture. You know the answer of the Ethiopian to St. Philip when he was asked: *Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest?* *Who said: And how can I unless some man show me.*† This is the voice of Nature. It expresses what we all

\* See Lecture V.

† Acts viii. 31

feel, and what we all want. For if the Scripture contains the revelation of God, surely there is some way provided in which we can ascertain what that revelation really means. When God speaks, He means something; so that to know that He speaks, but not to know what He means, is all the same as not to know that He does speak. And what is the fact? Is it not the case that passages which seem most obvious, are interpreted in manners, which it is not too hard to say are fatally different? When our dearest Lord said: *This is My Body*, we believe that He meant what He said, and the Church assures us that He did, yet we are accused of idolatry as a consequence of our belief; and we cannot help censuring for a want of Faith, those who will not accept the very words of Truth Himself. Which interpretation is right: the literal or the figurative? For everything seems to depend upon the meaning of these words, inasmuch as on them rests whether Religion is that reality and comfort and heart-filling blessing which we know it to be, or whether it is that cold, vacant, and desolating system which it becomes, when the Blessed Sacrament ceases to be its soul and life.—Remember, too, that the Scriptures were written in foreign languages not understood now-a-days by the people. The translations are but interpretations; so that if any one wants a translation, he wants an interpretation; but that interpretation will be valueless, unless we have a guarantee that it really conveys the sense of the original, and tells us therefore what God means. If the Church in her infallible wisdom, serves as our interpreter, are we not much more likely to know what the true sense of Scripture is, than if we read for ourselves an interpretation not sanctioned by any authority which can show itself to be divine and therefore claim our assent?

And when we add, that we will never take or interpret the Scriptures otherwise than in accordance

with the unanimous consent of the Fathers, we are most assuredly professing a most safe and prudent course of adhering to the truth. What we mean by the Fathers, are those men eminent for sanctity and learning, who in the early ages of the Church have contributed to illustrate her history, and to explain her body of doctrine. For it has been the work of God's Providence over His Church, that when heretics have attacked a doctrine, there has been raised up one or more special defenders of the truth. Such were SS. Justin, Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria in the early growth of the Church: Origen and St. Cyprian in a little later development: the glorious SS. Athanasius and Cyril the Doctors and champions of the Incarnation: SS. Chrysostom and Jerome the great authorities on Sacred Scripture: St. Augustine the Doctor of Grace, SS. Leo and Gregory the Great, the examples of pastoral zeal and solicitude. For the Apostle had said that God had given for the building up of the body of Christ in the Church, not Apostles and Prophets only, but Pastors and Doctors also.\* Holy and learned men like these have been the interpreters of the doctrine of the Church, and have shown what the living mind of the Church enlightened by the Holy Ghost has read in the pages of Sacred Scripture. Rash indeed would he be, that would prefer his own doubting and uncertain view before an unanimous testimony of such men! If the testimony of one Father is great, that of many is greater, that of all is of the highest moral certainty, and cannot be rejected without disloyalty to the Church. Observe, however, that what we mean is this. Not that an unanimous consent of the Fathers is recorded upon every single text of Scripture, but that wherever there is an unanimous consent (as there is on many points of doctrine) we must not go against such an

\* EPH. IV. 11.

interpretation, but accept it as being certainly expressive of the mind of God. Let me illustrate what we mean. Suppose in a disputed case of law, the advocate of one side is able to adduce the undoubted testimony of the ablest writers on that point, and to quote precedents in his favour from the most eminent judges, who have always been found to be in perfect harmony when they have had to pronounce authoritatively upon the question at issue, would not such testimony ensure success, and be a convincing and triumphant proof of the justice of his cause? We maintain, therefore, that the Catholic rule of interpreting through the Church, and of never contradicting the unanimous consent of the Fathers, is the most secure rule to follow, and that through it we have the only safe means of arriving at the real meaning of the written Word.

II. Thus we defend our own mode; now let us examine the mode followed by those who in this country are opposed to us. And what we insist upon in our arguing with them is, that they either must adopt the Catholic mode of proving the Canon and Inspiration, and of arriving at the interpretation of Scripture, or else that they have no satisfactory mode at all, and Scripture is therefore to them after all an uncertainty. We have a right to press this upon them, inasmuch as they take the Scripture alone as their rule of Faith, and therefore they ought to be able to show its adequacy and its inspiration, and to show it on their own principles. Let us examine what these principles are, and what process they involve.

1. There are two amongst the Thirty-Nine Articles which bear upon the point. The Sixth Article declares: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation."

And the twentieth declares that the Church hath authority in controversies of Faith, and is a witness and keeper of Holy Writ. Let us reason upon these two declarations. If the Sixth Article is true, then it must follow either that the Canon and Inspiration of Scripture are proved from Scripture, or that if they cannot be proved from Scripture they are not to be admitted as requisite or necessary to Salvation. Certainly neither the Canon of Scripture nor the Inspiration of Scripture can be proved from Scripture; and so it must follow from this Article, that to admit Scripture to be inspired, is not an Article of Faith or necessary for Salvation. And what then is to be said of that boasted and demonstrative veneration for the Written Word, if its inspiration is not an Article of Faith? If it is urged that St. Paul says\* that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*, we answer that the Apostle, in the passage alluded to, does not state what he is sometimes quoted as stating, and is not pretending to say a word about the inspiration of the New Testament. He is speaking, as the verse before shows, of the Scriptures which Timothy had known from his infancy, namely, only the Old Testament, as not a word of the New Testament was then written. And he does not say All Scripture is inspired, but that all Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable for doctrine, &c. If you look in the Protestant Version, you will observe that the word *is* is printed in Italics, which is the case with words inserted in the translation which are not in the original. All that St. Paul therefore says is, that Scripture inspired by God is profitable, which is not saying that everything that is *said to be* Scripture is so inspired. We say that the Books of the Machabees are Scripture, but our adversaries don't admit them, though of course they must admit, that *if* they are inspired, they *must* be

\* 2 Tim. iii, 16.



useful for proving points of doctrine. And even if this saying of St. Paul proved inspiration, it could only prove the inspiration of what was then Scripture, namely, the Old Testament. How, for instance, could that saying prove the inspiration of the Gospel of St. John, which was not written till thirty years after St. Paul's death?

And now as to the twentieth Article, which declares that the Church has authority in Controversies of Faith, and is the witness and keeper of Holy Writ. Is this true or is it not? If it is true, then according to the Article which we have just examined, it is to be found in Scripture, as nothing else is to be admitted as an Article of Faith. And where is it contained in Scripture that the Church has authority? In many places most undoubtedly, as we have oftentimes insisted. But those places in Scripture which give the Church authority, give her that Authority which we as Catholics claim for her, and therefore condemn our adversaries for denying her Authority. And if the Scriptures are to be received upon the Authority of the Church, that authority either can deceive us, or it cannot. If it can deceive, then the Protestant Church has a judge and a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, whose decision cannot command an undoubting Faith. If it cannot deceive, then the Catholic principle is admitted, that the Church is infallible, and what is to be the duty of Private judgment but to submit and be silent? Thus from these two Articles, we must conclude either that the Inspiration of Scripture is not an article of Faith, or that if it is so, the motive for knowing it is the infallible judgment of the Church, which is the justification of the Catholic motive.

2. With regard to proofs of Inspiration which are attempted from the internal evidences of the Sacred Scripture itself, such proofs never can adequately satisfy an enquirer. They presuppose Faith in Inspiration.



The satisfaction of mind, and spiritual flavour which are sometimes appealed to as evidences, never can serve to prove Inspiration. Books which are not inspired, but which contain solid spiritual instruction, or are filled with unction, may produce a similar satisfaction. I find as much satisfaction and spiritual flavour in reading the noble book of Ecclesiasticus, as I do in reading Ecclesiastes. Yet the Protestant Church will have it, in spite of such an appeal, that the latter is inspired, and the former is not. Luther, I presume, found very little spiritual flavour or satisfaction of mind in the Epistle of St. James, as he rejected that book from the Canon for condemning his impious doctrine of justification by Faith alone: does the Anglican Church which retains it, appeal to this flavour for its reason for so doing? It is said that the Mahometans say the same of their love for the Koran: Is it therefore inspired? Or if an internal proof is adduced from the fact that the Scriptures relate miracles and record prophecies which have been fulfilled, would such an evidence satisfy an infidel who denies the possibility of miracles? Or could it prove the inspiration of those books of Scripture which do not contain either one or the other? For instance, would the wonderful book of Isaiah suffice to prove the inspiration of the Epistle of St. James or of St. Paul to the Hebrews? And yet such proofs are attempted by men who condemn us for adopting the only reasonable process of arriving at faith in the Inspiration of Scripture by a source external to Scripture!

If then I ask, and press for an answer as I have a right to do, how can you who are not Catholics prove the Inspiration of Scripture? if you tell me that you never doubted it, that is not an answer: I ask, how can it be proved, on strictly Protestant principles, that the Inspiration of Scripture ought to be admitted as of Faith? You believe it, assuredly, on some authority:

you believe it because you have been told so. Many other things you believe without doubting; such things as you know by experience or on undoubted human testimony. But this is not knowing by Faith. To know and believe by Faith is to believe on the Authority of God: where have you God's authority for the Canon and Inspiration of Scripture? We have it in the testimony of the Church: you have it either on that testimony or not at all. And that testimony of the Church is either God's, or it is not. If it is, then you affirm the Catholic principle; and if it is not, then you have no motive for Faith, and your belief in the Inspiration of Scripture is unreasonable or merely human.

Hence upon the question of Inspiration, I sum up and conclude. Scripture cannot be admitted as a divinely inspired book to those who have no means of proving its inspiration, or of defending it against those who may happen to assail it. Protestants are in this position: on their own principles they are unable to establish the great fact of Inspiration, and are quite powerless against all assailants, unless they shelter themselves behind Catholic principles for their defence: therefore to the Protestant Church the Scriptures are not truly inspired, except that they be admitted to be so, upon principles which that Church condemns and renounces. If you individually, any one amongst you, believe in the Inspiration, analyze your reason for so doing, and you will find that you so believe because you have been led by authority. But what is the value of that authority? Can it deceive you, or can it not? If it can, then you have no certainty, and have no faith. You can only say that you think it probable or possible that the Scriptures are inspired, you cannot say that you know they are so. But if, being a divine messenger, having a commission from God, the authority which told you of the Inspiration, showed and brought home to you the credentials of its mission, then you

have believed on an infallible ground, and you have no uncertainty, but the absolute security of Faith. In other words, unless you admit the Catholic first principle of the infallibility of the Church, which is the keeper and witness of Sacred Scripture, it is not brought home to you as an inspired book, and all the boasted veneration for Scripture, when analyzed, comes to be nothing but a human feeling grounded on an uncertain probability

And when we next approach the practical question of interpreting the Scripture, remember what we mean by interpreting. We mean, ascertaining its real meaning: arriving at the knowledge of, not what may seem ingenious and probable but, what God Himself really and truly meant and means. For it is God's Word, expressing His own Thought. I have already asked you, and let me ask you again, whether you have given sufficient weight to the fact, that the translation which you use is an interpretation. You have an authorized version, and therefore you have an authorized interpretation. You don't translate for yourself: therefore you don't interpret for yourself. You interpret the English, if you will; but how are you to know that the English from which you are interpreting, is itself a correct interpretation of the original? Your Protestant version, beautiful in language, but incorrect as we maintain in its translation in many passages, has been placed in your hands, with an assurance that it is a faithful rendering of what God said, not in English, but in some other language, which is unknown to the bulk of those who read the Bibles which are circulated amongst them. Here we come to the same principle over again, which is a security to Catholics, but a perplexity to others. The Church is our interpreter, and the Church is a safe guide, and cannot deceive us. Either your interpreter is infallible: then don't blame us, if you agree with us; or it may deceive you, and so

the divine Message is communicated to you by an unreliable source and witness.

My dear Brethren, I have said enough on a very clear case, and shall say no more. I have said enough, I feel, to prove two things: that the Catholic mode of taking the Scriptures on the infallible authority of the Church, gives us the Scriptures as really the Word of God, and on a ground of Divine Faith. The Protestant who rejects the Divine Commission to the Church, and her consequent infallibility, has no mode of proving the Inspiration of Scripture, or of arriving at its meaning. Yet it is a solemn and a sacred question. Is the Bible the Word of God? Yes, says the Catholic, and he proves it. Is the Bible the Word of God? Yes, says the Protestant; because the Catholic proves it for me. It must come to this. The authority of the Catholic Church is the only one for the Bible. The Church watched over it at its formation; for the Church existed before the Bible. The Church drew it up into its form, perfect as we have it, and not mutilated and robbed of six books as the Protestant Church gives it, or of eight, as Luther would give it. She preserved it through many dangers and vicissitudes, and has all along been upon earth its voucher and sanction. And the Church, whose members under divine inspiration, wrote the Bible, who drew it up, published it, and gave it to the world, ever continues to be its guardian and witness. Jealously she maintains her right; but with the love of a mother, as well as the wisdom of a teacher, she tells us to rely upon her to whom these Oracles of God have been committed, and she dispenses to us their meaning, and their beautiful and practical lessons, under the guidance of that Spirit, who, according to a promise which has been most solemnly enregistered, will guide her in all truth, and abide with her for ever.

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXIX.

THE SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM.



## LECTURE XXIX

### THE SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM.

*"I also profess that there are truly and properly seven Sacraments of the New Law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord," &c.*

It is, my dear brethren, with unusual joy that I enter upon the most noble subject which this declaration of the Creed of Pope Pius IV. introduces before us. It is a subject to which I have been long looking forward; for I have desired to unfold to you the riches of the Church in her beautiful Sacramental system, with a conviction that the view of the working of the Church here displayed will gain love, loyalty, and devotedness to her from all. What I have to bring before you now is not a matter of theory, but of the most constant practice; it involves indeed questions of doctrine, but it is doctrine manifested in the life, activity, and discipline of the Church. Here it is that we see her reality, her solicitude, her individual care, and her restless watchfulness over each single soul. Here it is that the Church is most truly brought home as a mother to each of us, and that we see how she is always working towards gaining and preserving us for heaven. When to the Prophet Isaias was vouchsafed his vision into the days of the New Law, he saw this life and working, and exclaimed of those happy ones, whose eyes have been blessed in seeing what we see: *You shall drink waters in joy from the Saviour's fountains; and you shall say in that day.*



*Praise ye the Lord, and call upon His Name, make his inventions known among the people.\** I wish then to obey the orders of the prophet, and to make these inventions known. I wish to let you see the richness and perfection of the Catholic Church; and when you contrast with her resources, the meagreness and nothingness of those who have abandoned her, you will all run with joy to draw those waters, and will find health, refreshment, and strength in these institutions of love.

What I propose to do for your instruction this evening is, first to explain to you what is meant by a Sacrament, and to illustrate its meaning by the Sacrament of Baptism, which is generally admitted, or supposed to be admitted, in this country. I shall pass on in the following Lectures to the Sacrament of Penance, defend the doctrine of the Church, and her practice in regard to Confession and Indulgences. Next I will show to you her beautiful and most holy teaching on the holiest of the Sacraments, the Blessed Eucharist; and lastly I will explain the other four Sacraments which complete these institutions of God's love and mercy.

I. As usual I will commence with the definition of a Sacrament. But as in explaining the meaning of a Sacrament, we have to use the important and practical word *Grace*, we must first understand what is meant by Grace.

1. By Grace, then, we mean any of those gifts and helps which God bestows upon us, principally in reference to our salvation. For God has made us for heaven, and wishes us there to arrive at a possession of Himself. This is our supernatural end, for the attainment of which we require supernatural help. So that we define Grace to be a supernatural gift freely be-

stowed upon us by God, for our sanctification and salvation. God alone is the author and bestower of Grace; for it is His gift. And being a gift and not a debt, He gives it freely, uncontrolled by any necessity, and influenced only by His own good will. What we know concerning Grace from the Sacred Scriptures and the teaching of the Church is briefly this. When God created our first parents, He created them in a state of Grace: that is to say, He not only gave them gifts suited to their natural state and wants, but He super-added the gifts which fitted them for a supernatural connexion with God. But by their wilful sin of disobedience they forfeited these supernatural gifts, and thus lost that holiness and justice in which they had been formed, and transmitted as a heritage to all their posterity the evils which they had brought upon themselves. But by the great mystery of the Incarnation, man was redeemed and restored to the inheritance from which he had fallen; so the Scriptures tell us that *we have been bought at a Great Price,\** and remind us that *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of His Son.†* By the redemption of Christ, therefore, we have been restored to Grace; and thus Grace implies those supernatural gifts which through the Merits of Christ are bestowed upon us for the sanctification and salvation of our souls.

The Scriptures further teach us that Grace makes us the children and friends of God, that it is the life and beauty of the soul, that it makes us temples of the Holy Ghost, and that it is the indwelling in us of the Spirit of God. Under these respects Grace is called a *sanctifying* gift of God. But, moreover, Grace is the strength of the soul: it is that inward help which enables us to keep God's commandments, to avoid evil, and to do good, and thus to work out our salvation.

\* 1 Cor. vi. 20.

† Rom. v. 10.

It enlightens the mind, it moves the will, it supports us in our work, and ennobles its result; and under this respect it is called an *actual* gift of God, necessary for the high purpose which it realises; for it is of His Grace that our dear Lord speaks when He says: *Without me you can do nothing*;\* and St. Paul, *By the Grace of God I am what I am*.† We may by our faithfulness and cooperation increase this Grace within us, as the parable of the talents reminds us: we may diminish it by our heedlessness, as the censure pronounced upon the Angel of Ephesus declares:‡ we may utterly lose it by wilful sin, which is the death of the soul, inasmuch as it destroys its supernatural life: it may be recovered by adopting certain means, as God never despises a contrite and humble heart. We believe also that God has in His wisdom instituted various means by which Grace, through the Merits of Christ, or which is the same thing, the benefit of the Redemption of Christ in the system of Grace, is communicated to our souls. Such is prayer, to which Almighty God promises so repeatedly that He will listen, and will grant what is asked for. Such also are acts of charity to our neighbour, which form a condition on which God will give Grace to us, as when He says: *Give, and it shall be given to you*.§ And such also are the Sacraments which have been instituted in the wisdom and generosity of God, as channels to convey Grace to our souls.

2. A Sacrament therefore is a means or instrument appointed and designed by God for the purpose of bestowing Grace upon us. Now, as man is not simply a spiritual being, but has those outward powers and senses through which the soul manifests its operations, and as by outward and sensible signs and acts we

\* John xv. 5.

+ 1 Cor. xv. 10.

‡ Rev. ii. 4.

§ Luke vi. 38.

exhibit our worship of God and our dependence upon Him, so also has it pleased God to make use of and thus to consecrate certain outward and sensible actions, by the performance of which He condescends to give a pledge and assurance that Grace is bestowed upon us. And these sensible signs which are appointed by God for so holy a purpose are not without their meaning. They express outwardly a special inward effect of the Grace bestowed. And therefore a Sacrament is defined "an outward sign of inward Grace instituted by Christ, by which Grace is conveyed to the soul." Such is the definition given in our Catechism, meaning precisely the same as that which is given from St. Augustine in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, where a Sacrament is called "a visible sign of an invisible Grace, instituted for our justification."

Observe, therefore, that in every Sacrament there are three requisites. Some outward act which addresses itself to our senses; an inward invisible reality which is effected through that outward act; and this sign must not be simply a humanly conventional one, but it must have been adopted for that purpose, and instituted by Christ, the founder of the Church, and the ordainer of its outward worship. With regard to the outward or "sensible" act, this is of a two-fold nature, consisting of what is called its *matter* and its *form*: the matter being that which is used and applied in the Sacrament, and the form the words which are spoken at the time expressive of the act performed. You will easily understand what I mean, if I illustrate the definition of a Sacrament by Baptism. The outward sign is the washing with water; the inward Grace is the removal of the stain of original sin; and the institution of Christ is clearly known from the words of Christ to Nicodemus, *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into*

*the kingdom of God ;\** and from His commission to the Apostles: *Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*† And the outward sign in Baptism has its two parts: the pouring of the water which is the *matter* of the Sacrament, and the words, I baptize thee, &c. which is the *form*. The Catholic Church further teaches that the Sacraments owe their efficacy, not to the worthiness of the minister who is engaged in their administration, but to the Merits of Christ which are applied to our souls by the very performance of the act instituted by our Lord. Thus St. Augustine reminds us that the baptisms administered by Judas were not repeated, but were valid, because it was the baptism of Christ which he administered; but the baptisms of St. John the Baptist were repeated, because his were not conferred in the name and by virtue of the institution of Christ.‡ For it is God Himself who works in the Sacraments, and man is but a minister and means which He condescends to use for so holy a purpose.

3. Thus the Sacraments show how Almighty God in His Wisdom and Goodness vouchsafes to act in some respects towards us, as He would have us to act towards Him. Religion is indeed essentially spiritual and inward. God will be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and from the heart. But He will also have an outward proof of this inward spirit: and for two reasons. First, because He demands the worship of the whole man, body as well as soul. And secondly, because Religion is not only an individual duty obligatory upon each man, but it is a social and general duty devolving upon the whole of mankind, whose members ought to be bound together by some outward rites and

\* John iii. 5.

† Matt. xxviii. 19.

‡ Aug. ap. Cat. Conc. Trid.

forms in paying an united tribute to the great God of the Universe. I need only cite in illustration the fact of the institution of the Sabbath as a special day for an outward worship of God, or the fact of people assembling together in a church, in order to send up to their Lord and Master an harmonious tribute of prayer and praise. And our good God has been pleased upon His part to select certain outward acts in which He deals with us, and in which by the performance of a deed which He has appointed, He gives a pledge of His love, and a security for the bestowal of a promised Grace and blessing. Those then who would object to the doctrine of the Catholic Church upon the Sacramental system can have thought but very little on the ways of God in His dealings with us, and can know but very little of what the Church teaches on this beautiful and practical subject. Because God *can* deal with us immediately without the intervention of any means or instrument or outward working, it does not follow that He always *does* so. Witness the miracles of our dear Lord. Sometimes He spoke but a word and the wonderful result followed: sometimes He went through a process, as when He healed the blind man, by spreading clay over his eyes and ordering him to wash in the pool of Siloe.\* But to this point I will return before we conclude this evening.

II. With regard to the number of the Sacraments, the Catholic Church uniformly and universally has taught and teaches that there are seven. The Protestant Church in the 25th of the 39 Articles, and in the Catechism, teach that there are but two. Here is an important, a practical, and, we are bound to say it, a fatal difference. It is a difference not of theory but of practice: it is not the rejection of truth, upon the knowledge of which the accident of ignorance might

\* John ix.

excuse; but it is the positive, actual and constant rejection of means appointed by Almighty God, with the very intention that they should be among the ordinary channels of His Grace. A false teaching, therefore, upon this point makes the heart bleed with sorrow; for through it, souls are lost and are left to perish through the refusal of the means which God has left in such abundance at our disposal. It will, of course, be my duty to show in due course of each one of the seven Sacraments, that it has all the requisites of a Sacrament, and that it has been instituted by our dear Lord, as a visible sign of the invisible Grace which it is destined to convey to the soul. If the Scriptures do not state that they are seven in number, so neither do they state they are two; but we shall see that for each of the five which are denied in the Church established in this kingdom, there is the same authority in the Word of God, as for the two which are admitted; and that the same principle which denies any of those five would lead equally to a denial of the two. Nor can it be said, with any appearance of truth and consistency, that the admission of so many Sacraments militates against the efficacy of the Merits of Christ, inasmuch as the Church is always assiduous in teaching that it is these very Merits which are conveyed to our souls by the Sacraments; and assuredly seven do not militate against these Merits more than two would, since all are grounded on the same principle.

But if you would know how perfect is the Sacramental System of the Catholic Church, and how we might in some measure have anticipated, by an antecedent expediency or even necessity, that there should be seven, even if the Word of God and the authority of the Church did not so assure us, listen to the view which the Church holds before us, when she invites us to come and meditate upon the beauty and wisdom



of the ways of God, and to drink waters in joy from the Saviour's fountains. The principle established by our Blessed Lord, when addressing Nicodemus, He called the Sacrament of Baptism the being *born again*, expresses the principle which makes the Sacramental System complete with seven. For in comparing the spiritual wants of the soul with the natural wants of the body, we shall see how the Sacraments extend along the whole path of life, and are at hand for use and blessing in its various periods and circumstances. We commence our natural life by being born. If birth is entering into life by one gate, as death is leaving it by another, directly we enter this gate, the Church comes provided with a Sacramental help to give birth to the soul, and to make it enter into the gate of the Church, as an essential condition for passing afterwards into the kingdom of God. So that BAPTISM is really the Sacrament of *Regeneration*: it is the spiritual birth of the soul: it is the infusion into it of the life of Grace. And the only proof I need give of this, to show that it is not simply a view, ingenious perhaps and beautiful in imagination, but that it is a truth and fact solidly founded and having an actual existence, is the declaration of our Lord Himself: *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.\** But man is not to be born only. His life is not one that is under the mere guidance of instinct. He requires to be trained and educated and prepared for the great struggles of life. And when the time of childhood passes away, and the period of full responsibility and the age of the formation of character, and of preparing for the duties of future manhood come upon him, not only is the social duty of education to be cared for, but the Church which watched over the second birth of the soul, watches over its

\* John iii. 5.

spiritual or second education also, and *confirms* and *anoints* the young combatant, gives him the mark and character of a soldier, and enables him by the Grace of CONFIRMATION to do battle manfully against the enemies of his soul. Thus, if there is any soundness in the principles of those who insist so much upon the education of the people, our dear Lord shows that He had anticipated the demand in the provision that He made for the children of His Church. And when life is commenced it requires to be supported and preserved by food and remedies. Hence two Sacraments, differing from the others inasmuch as they are to be frequently received throughout life. The BLESSED EUCHARIST is truly the food of the soul, as our dear Lord so literally calls it, when He says: *He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.\** And the Sacrament of PENANCE is that by which the ailments of the soul are removed and cured, and its spiritual life renovated and strengthened. These are two of our dear Saviour's fountains from which we may again and again draw waters in joy, upon whose qualities and nature we shall have later to dwell in some fulness. And as life has its beginning, so it has its end; and most awful is this end, as it is the passage to eternity. The Church, knowing how much depends upon Death, prepares the soul for it by a special Sacrament. As Baptism followed birth, EXTREME UNCTION precedes death; for the soul and body are still united, and that union is essential for a Sacrament. Here again there is a holy anointing, in order to strengthen the soul in the moment of its mortal conflict. How good a Mother is the Church, which forgets not the death-bed of her child, but as with eager love she received the soul on its entry into life, with patient love prepares it for its passage through death! Such are the five Sacraments,

\* John vi. 59.

which so well answer these five periods or exigencies of life. But there are two more, each of which prepares for the entrance upon a special state of life. The ordinary call of man is to embrace that state which was blessed in Paradise, when Almighty God formed the union between our first parents, bade them *to increase and multiply*,\* and thus laid down the law of family. For such as are bound together in such an union, and are to take upon themselves the heavy responsibility of the married state, there is provided in the Church the special grace that is given in the Sacrament of MATRIMONY. And to those whom God calls to another kind of responsibility, to give up the care of family, in order to be at liberty in a state of holy celibacy to devote themselves to the apostolical work of the ministry in the care of souls and the administration of the rites of Religion, the Sacrament of HOLY ORDERS gives the high and privileged Grace requisite for such awful and godly duties. And thus the number is completed, and finds its integrity in this sevenfold distribution. What beauty and perfection is here, and what an empty and mutilated unreality is there elsewhere! Therefore have I said that the error is fatal of those, who not only destroy the system of the Sacraments by denying five of them, but seem to tear the mystical body of our Lord limb from limb, in the cruel and unholy assault which they have made upon these institutions of Love.

III. In support of the Sacramental system of the Church, and the supernatural effects hereby produced, we find an argument afforded us in the Miracles by which the Life of our dear Lord upon earth was so constantly illustrated. *Whatsoever things have been written, have been written for our instruction*, is a principle laid down by St. Paul, and one which

\* Gen. i. 28.

certainly has no exception in those innumerable and varied wonders which are recorded in the Gospel. For a Sacrament belongs to the order of Miracles for one reason; namely, that though it is ordinary, yet it is supernatural, and it produces an effect which cannot be accounted for by any of the laws of nature. The Miracles of our Lord were frequent enough to be considered the ordinary result of His intervention, but yet they clearly belonged to the supernatural order. We might add that a prominent objection made by the heretic to the Sacraments, is the same as is made by the infidel against Miracles: they are supernatural, and cannot be accounted for in accordance with natural laws. These Miracles, we maintain, were the prefiguring of some great system in the Church; and this is sufficiently indicated in the words of our dear Saviour, when He says that those who believe in Him shall do even greater works than He had done.\* What can be greater than the healing of the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead to life, which were among His Works? The greater miracles, says St. Gregory,† are the spiritual ones which are daily being wrought in the Church; and they are greater for this reason, because it is not bodies but souls which are thus raised to life. And thus we have an answer ready for those who would argue against the claims of the Church to their obedience, that the wonders wrought by the Apostles have now ceased. Our Lord's promise has not fallen through, as the constant administration of the Sacraments can testify.

Some of these Miracles were performed in behalf of those who had been *born* with the infirmities from

\* John xiv. 12.

† Quoted by Cardinal Wiseman in his able Essay on the Miracles of the New Testament, where this argument is beautifully developed.

which our Blessed Lord released them, and in such cases it is frequently recorded that at the cure the devil was driven forth from the afflicted one. How truly are similar spiritual effects produced by the efficacy of Baptism, in the solemn administration of which the Catholic ritual prescribes acts and words spoken by our Lord in some of these cases. Others again refer to sicknesses contracted during life; and we have those afflicted with leprosy and palsy, more than once receiving the blessing of a cure, and with attending circumstances which referred to the then future Sacrament of Penance. As when the Lepers were told to go and show themselves to the Priests, and to the sick man of the palsy our Lord declared that his sins were forgiven. To this same Sacrament also must be referred the raising of the dead, as Penance restores to the soul its lost supernatural life. In some cases again it is declared that the sick were anointed with oil and thus wonderfully cured,\* and this is a matter used by the Church in more than one of her Sacraments. Other miracles again had no reference to sicknesses, but concerned those substances which Christ afterwards chose as the matter of the greatest and holiest of the Sacraments. We have His first Miracle performed upon a change of substance, and the result was that Wine, which He produced miraculously at the first banquet which He attended; as at His last one He changed the same substance into His own Most Precious Blood. And again, we have the notable miracle performed upon Bread, when He multiplied the loaves for the support of the languishing multitude, and availed Himself of the occasion of the Miracle, to foretel a future change, when the Bread would become His own Flesh, which He would give for the life of the world. Thus, then, can the Catholic

\* Mark vi. 13.

Church triumphantly point to the Miracles of our dear Saviour, not only as proofs of His Divinity, but as the solemn inauguration of that supernatural order, which by the Apostles and their successors has been perpetuated in the Sacramental System.

To those who admit the truth of Christianity, but refuse allegiance to the Catholic Church, and object to her doctrine upon the Sacraments, we are prepared with an answer, and have a principle upon which we can fearlessly defend our position. The objections that are adduced against us are far more from reason than from Scripture. We will defend each Sacrament in its due course; and before concluding this series of Lectures, we will devote some little time to special answers to the most ordinary objections which are brought against our doctrines. At the present moment we need only allude to one or two points.—Against the use of Sacraments as practised in the Church, it is sometimes said that such an intervention tends to limit our idea of the greatness of God, as if He required any instrument or means for bestowing His Grace upon the soul. And yet, my dear Brethren, who is Man that he should pretend to criticize the ways of God, and to ask the motive of His acts! *For who hath known the mind of God, and who hath been His Counsellor?\** Those who admit the efficacy of Baptism, believe that God uses an instrument for conveying Grace there, why should they deny it elsewhere? God may act without an intermediary, but He does not will always to do so. He created the Universe out of nothing, but He would not, though He could equally well have done so, create man out of nothing; but He went through a twofold process in making him, first forming his body out of the dust of the earth, and afterwards breathing into him the spirit

of life. When again He sent down the Holy Spirit upon His Apostles upon the day of Pentecost, He did not infuse this Gift in the same invisible manner in which He so often pours It into a soul, but He would send It down in fiery tongues and with the rush of a mighty wind. When our dear Lord converted St. Peter after his denial, it was only by a look: when He called the Apostle of the Gentiles it was by hurling him to the ground, and by rebuking him for his persecution of the Church. Who then is to lay down upon human principles a law of analogy for the working of that Spirit, which breatheth where and when and how It listeth, and to deny a Sacramental operation in those cases, in which God, in condescension to our weakness and through very love and to inspire confidence and assurance, vouchsafes to adopt such a means in His dealing with us?

If you will have an analogy, see it here. Man being formed of body and soul, and Sacraments being instituted for men, hence results their instrumental character. There is a beautiful harmony between them, and the whole working reality of the Mystery of the Incarnation. In that Mystery God took upon Himself an outward form: He had given to His Church outward and visible marks: He wishes His children to serve Him, in spirit and in truth indeed, but yet in an outward obedience as expressive of this inward spirit. The object of the Incarnation, as St. Paul so truly declares, is *to re-establish all things in Christ*.\* Man lost the Grace of God through the flesh, and by yielding to its seduction the spirit was corrupted. God then restores the spirit through the flesh, and thus *re-establishes in Christ*, what had been injured in Adam. And as from your own daily experience you know how

\* Eph. i, 10



sin finds its passage to the soul through the avenue of the senses of the body, when pride, revenge, sensuality, covetousness, and other evil feelings influence you from God, bow down in thankfulness and adoration to God, who in the system of the Sacraments uses the body as the avenue of Grace.

Would you again see how God teaches us in His mode of acting in the sacraments? Let me remind you of your own dignity, and of the noble image and likeness to which you have been made. If you are like to God, God is like to you, and He deigns to show this likeness even in the mode in which He works upon your soul. We have defined a Sacrament to be an instrument. Analyze your mode of working upon objects external to yourself, and you will see how essential is an instrument to you. Archimedes could have moved the world, if he had had the requisite instrument. With instruments you can do almost everything, without them nothing. Man has devised a means of communication between the two most important continents of the world, and is impatient to destroy the time and space which now keep them asunder. But because his instrument was unequal to his conception, the result of his labours lies buried at the bottom of the ocean, to the confusion of his ambition and the disappointment of his hopes. Try your power even over the grain of sand which you tread contemptuously under your feet as you walk along majestically, lord and master of the world! Bid it move out of your way and quit your sight. It stands where it stood, and maintains its independence. You can take it in your hand, and hurl it to a distance, or you can crush it ignominiously beneath you: but here it has done your will, only because you have used an instrument, for such are our limbs, which are given to us to serve the commands of the soul. How was this noble church built, its stone

and marble brought forth from their beds in the quarry, fashioned into shape, raised block upon block, until, so beautifully illustrative of the working of a sacrament, it has become the house of God and the gate of heaven? All has been realized by the help of instruments. The power was applied to the matter: and the moment that the mind commanded the exertion of the necessary force, the weight was raised and fixed in its place. So, if in the works of man, the soul can influence matter, why in the works of God, cannot matter influence the soul?

When, fourteen centuries ago, St. Gregory Nazianzen was asked to explain, how in Baptism the soul could be regenerated by water, he promised to give the solution of supernatural regeneration, if it could be explained to him, how in the secret of natural generation the seed fructifies and produces its hundredfold. And when the modern unbeliever, proud in the midst of the danger attendant upon his little knowledge, asks how baptism can cleanse the soul, and how matter and form can produce a spiritual effect, we may answer him according to the littleness of his wisdom. What is Baptism, he says, but words and water, and what can words and water do? \* What can words do, and what have they not done? They can serve to infuse the spirit of one man into a nation, and in the time of oppression to turn slaves into heroes. What can water do? Is this to be asked in the nineteenth century, when we see the application that has been made of it by the genius of man, as an instrument for commerce and civilization. For what else is steam, but water acted upon and applied by the mind of man? If water is so powerful when the genius of man is in it, what may it not do when the genius of God is there!

\* See Lacordaire, Conference 59, "Du Sacrement."

When our dear Lord made the blind man see, He touched his eyes with the clay of the earth, and the blind man saw. It was a Miracle, but it was a lesson. It shows how God lowers the pride of man, in associating a noble gift with the teaching of humility. Such is the lesson of a Sacrament.

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXX.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

(No. 1.)



## LECTURE XXX.

### THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

(No. I.)

In pursuing the beautiful, practical and living system of the Sacraments in the Catholic Church, which I opened for you last Sunday, I come this evening to speak upon the Sacrament of Penance or Confession. Under some respects it is the most practical question presented by the Sacraments. For it is most frequent in its administration, most striking in its results, most illustrative of the whole life and intention of Christ, who came to redeem us from sin, and, I must add, the most misrepresented and attacked by the enemies of the Church. Hear me, my dear Brethren, and I will show its Sacramental reality; and I hope to be able not only to explain and to defend the teaching of the Church upon this important doctrine, but also to draw souls which have not hitherto understood this reality to admit its truth and adopt its practice.

I. We have understood from our definition, that every Sacrament has three requisites: viz., an outward sign, an inward Grace which that sign represents, and the institution of Christ. These three requisites are found in the Sacrament of Penance. For the object of this Sacrament is to remit sins which have been committed after Baptism; and the sign, the Grace, and

the institution of Christ fully answer this important purpose. The sign consists in those outward acts which are performed by the person who is the subject of the Sacrament, when by the humble declaration of his sins he expresses the inward sorrow of his heart, and by the minister of the Sacrament, when by the outward exercise of his judicial and ministerial office, he pronounces the sentence, or form, which is ratified in Heaven. The inward Grace is the remission of sin, and the bestowal upon the soul of the favour and friendship of God which had been forfeited by sin. The institution of Christ is most clearly recorded in the Gospel of St. John, when after His Resurrection, He performed the solemn act of breathing upon His Apostles, and declared that whosoever sins they forgave were really and actually forgiven. But upon this point it will be necessary to enter with some fullness, though the fact is so clear that it is wonderful that it should require to be discussed at all.

1. And first, we may justly say that there is an antecedent probability that amongst the Sacraments of the Christian law, there should be one especially destined for the remission of sin. The very object of our dear Lord's coming upon earth was to save sinners. What St. Paul says in his first pastoral letter to Timothy: *A faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners,\** is but the declaration made by Jesus Christ Himself: *I have come not to call the just, but sinners.†* And He did call them when He invited all who were burdened and labouring to come to Him, and when He went amongst them so constantly that it was even a subject for reproach against Him, that He became their associate, and sat at table with them. His miracles symbolized and prefigured the curing and

\* 1 Tim. i. 15.

† Matt. ix. 14.



removing of spiritual diseases: His parables showed a solicitude in their regard, and in the cases of the Prodigal Son, the Good Shepherd and the Good Samaritan, we can read the sentiments of that Sacred Heart, which would rejoice as keenly as the Angels over a single sinner that was brought to repentance. Mary Magdalene, Zachæus, the Samaritan woman, and the penitent thief were amongst his trophies, and serve to show how His Missionary zeal was exercised amongst such as are now in the ministry of the Church subjects for the Sacrament of Penance.

2. Leaving the province of probability, we approach to facts; and we find assurances that in the working of the Church there should be a special provision for the case of sinners. If St. John the Baptist, the precursor of our Lord, prepared the people for the coming of their Redeemer, especially by preaching the necessity of doing penance, much more did those who were to come after our Lord as His consecrated ministers and apostles, receive an authority to perpetuate what was foretold by the Baptist, and inaugurated by our Lord Himself. The solemn assurance that He made to the Apostles: *As My Father hath sent Me so do I send you*, which we have so often had occasion to refer to as the source of Apostolical jurisdiction, must have had its applicability in behalf of those for whom He had been so especially sent. And before His Passion and the actual bestowal of the power of forgiveness, we find the promise that such power was to be given, when to the Apostles our Lord so explicitly said: *Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in Heaven.\** And when the Resurrection had taken place, and our Lord was more fully transferring to His Apostles all that power,

that was given to Him in heaven and upon earth, He showed clearly what was meant by this binding and loosing. Hear the charge as it was given when coming amongst His Apostles for the first time after His Resurrection, He gives them the proof of His Divinity in the very fact of His restoration to life, and the proof of His continued Humanity in showing the wounds in His Hands and Side. He said to them: *Peace be to you: As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed upon them, and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.\** Here certainly is a power given to the Pastors of the Church, for such were the Apostles, and given with solemnity. Are we to say that the words of our dearest Lord on that occasion meant nothing? Or if they did mean anything, what else did they mean or could they have meant, but that the power was really to be exercised, and that they were to forgive sins or to retain them according to the judgment which they were then authorized to exercise? And as if our dear Lord would anticipate the objection which future unbelievers would raise, He was not content with pronouncing words which are clear beyond dispute, but would accompany them with the solemn act of breathing into the Apostles the Holy Spirit which He then infused into them. So much then, for the clear warrant of Scripture for the Divine institution of this Sacrament; a warrant which authorized the Apostles to insert in their Creed the Article which declares belief in the Forgiveness of Sins.

II. The Catholic Church in her administration of this Sacrament requires upon the part of the person who seeks forgiveness, three acts as forming upon his

\* John xx. 21, 23.

part the matter of the Sacrament; and these are Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction. An explanation of these will show how suitable they are, how they are necessarily implied in the process of obtaining forgiveness, and how truly they contribute to the working efficacy of this institution of mercy. Sin is a transgression of a law. Whenever we ask forgiveness for such a transgression, it is unreasonable to expect the pardon unless we are willing to do three things: namely, to be inwardly sorry for violating the law, to make an expression of this sorrow in a manner that will satisfy him whose duty it is to defend the law, and lastly to make such compensation as circumstances may require. Take the instance of a child who by some deliberate act of waywardness has incurred the just displeasure of his father, and who comes to ask his forgiveness. He will manifest that he is sorry for his misdeed, he will show too by some outward act of demeanour that he is conveying to his father an assurance of this sorrow, and if sincere he will gladly restore himself to favour by submitting to what the father imposes as a condition. Is there any generous child in the world whose heart will not at once respond to this threefold requirement?

1. Contrition is a sorrow from the heart and a detestation for the sins which we have committed, with a firm determination never to commit them again. So essential is this sorrow for obtaining forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance, that the Church ever urges it as the one great point to be insisted upon. No sorrow, no forgiveness. Nor is the sorrow to be a superficial, quickly formed grief, that is forgotten as readily as it is conceived; but it must be a deep, earnest, heartfelt anguish of soul, grounded upon motives which must be well pondered upon, that they may sink into the heart and leave a lasting impression. It is not for me now to dilate upon the nature of this sorrow, and the

consideration of the motives which will excite it; but I need only appeal to every Catholic child or convert who has been instructed in his duty, how instant the Church is upon this sorrow as an essential condition for obtaining forgiveness, and to every Priest who knows so well how he is bound to satisfy himself upon its existence, before he can venture to pronounce an absolution, which cannot, in the absence of such a condition, be ratified in heaven. Let any one who sincerely seeks the information only read over the Acts of Contrition in our ordinary manuals of prayer, with the preliminary considerations, and he may learn what perhaps he never knew before, how to weep over his sins in the bitterness of his soul, and be moved to pray to God to create a clean heart within him, and to strengthen him with a perfect spirit. How false is it, then, to state that the Catholic Church requires nothing but Confession as a condition for forgiveness, when she never ceases to urge Contrition as the most important of the three acts of the penitent, since without it the Sacrament becomes a Sacrilege.

2. Confession, which is the second act on the part of the penitent, and upon which I will proceed immediately to speak more fully, is that self-accusation before a minister of God which Contrition suggests, and which independently of its Divine institution, is always a relief to an afflicted and sorrowing soul. Here it is that our dearest Saviour consecrated that natural feeling which prompts us, upon occasions of anguish, to find a sympathizing heart, into which we can pour our feelings, and where we may meet with assurances of condolence, and receive words of comfort and advice. For the Church never forgets that sinners are still her children: she laments their departure from the line of duty, but remains longing for their return like the father of the Prodigal, and runs out to meet them on their homeward way. Upon their confession: *I have*

*sinned against heaven and before thee*, she throws over them her mantle of love, whispers words of confidence, and renews all her tokens of affection. Nor is this Confession merely the dictate of nature, but it is prescribed as the wholesome corrective of that pride, which the Wise man assures us precedes every fall,\* and which therefore implies humiliation as a consequence of atonement. And here our dear Lord has shown Himself forbearing and indulgent as ever; for He has made Confession far less galling and humiliating than the circumstance of sin would oftentimes imply: for He has not ordered the Confession to be made publicly, but He prescribes it to be whispered into the ear of one of His own ministers, prepared by a special Grace to hear the tale of sorrow, and bound by the most sacred and awful obligation to leave it for ever buried in that heart in which the poor penitent has chosen to hide it. And again the fact of Confession leads to an amendment of life, because it teaches self-study, inasmuch as the searching into one's sins, which the preparation implies, displays our weaknesses, and makes known the occasions which have led us into sin. At the same time it suggests and discovers the proper and most effectual remedies, and thus not only affects the past, but becomes a precaution and preventative for the future. As in the exercise of his pastoral duty in the Sacrament of Penance, the minister is taught always to bear in mind not only his office of judge, but also of father, doctor and guide, so does the penitent in seeking for the benefit of this institution find himself to be not a culprit merely, but a child, a patient and a disciple.

3. As Confession follows after and is suggested appropriately by Contrition, so in its turn does it suggest and lead to that Satisfaction or compensation

\* Prov. xvi. 18.

which the commission of sin implies, and which the violated law demands. How the nature of sin, the sincerity of sorrow, and the justice of God establish the principle of Satisfaction, shall occupy our attention next Sunday, when in connexion with this part of the Sacrament, I shall explain to you the doctrine of Indulgences. I will limit myself at present to the practical question of Confession.

III. If the Sacrament of Penance is of Divine institution, as the solemn commission made to the Apostles of a power to forgive or retain sins, most distinctly proves, Confession as an integral part of the Sacrament, claims of course an equivalent sanction. It is a truth, that the Catholic Church which regards Penance as a Sacrament, teaches that Confession is an essential act in constituting the matter of the Sacrament. In this Catholic Church, spread with its millions of members throughout the world, confession is one of those stubborn things which we call a Fact. It is existing as a reality, it is believed in, it is in daily and hourly practice, and in crowded parishes it forms a more constant occupation and a greater sphere of labour than all other pastoral duties put together. It has those nine-tenths of a law which possession claims; and being a fact, how are we to account for its origin? Is it of human origin, when we find that notwithstanding the comfort and relief it affords when practised, there are so many human prejudices arrayed against it, and in our depraved nature so many reasons that would make us shrink from the humiliation which attends it? Or if not of human origin, is its origin divine? The Catholic Church fearlessly answers that it is so: that it has had an Author greater and more powerful than man, and that it has come into existence and into its working reality, through the wisdom, goodness, and mercy of God. Let me prove it.

1. Before appealing directly to the words of the



institution of the Sacrament of Penance, which give a judicial power to the ministers of the Sacrament, let me remind you of the judicial power allowed to the priesthood in that Levitical law, which only contained a shadow of the good things of the New Law. In Lev. v. 18, the priest who offered the sacrifice for sin was to proportion it *to the measure and estimation of the sin*; so that he was to know the sin and judge of its greatness. And that this knowledge was to be arrived at by means of the confession of the sinner, is expressly stated in Num. v. 6, 7. *Say to the children of Israel: When a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and offended, they shall confess their sin, &c.* I do not say that this was a Sacramental Confession, for Penance was not a Sacrament in the Old Law, but it prefigured and prepared the way for the higher exercise of judicial power committed to the priesthood of the New dispensation. And that such judicial power is truly given, and is to be exercised in the Christian Church, follows at once from the words of institution, as we cannot fail to see.

2. We have already cited the words of our Lord promising the power, in Matt. xviii., and the conferring of the power in John xx. On both of these occasions our Blessed Lord states an alternative between *binding* and *loosing*, *forgiving* and *retaining*. It is an awful spiritual power that is to be exercised, and it must be used discreetly. How is the minister to come to his conclusion as to whether he is to forgive or retain, and pronounce a sentence which will be held good before heaven, unless he know the circumstances of the case in which he is to pronounce judgment? And how is he to know these circumstances with a knowledge most nearly approaching to the knowledge of Him



*who searcheth the reins and the heart,\** unless the knowledge be communicated by him who alone upon earth knows his own heart, and its motives and working? Would the end be equally well gained, if on every instance the minister at once absolved the sinner and sent him away with a blessing of peace? In such case, the power of retaining would never be exercised, and it would have been an empty declaration on the part of our Lord, when He conferred it. Or are we to say, that man never ought to dare to retain and refuse forgiveness to the sin of his fellow man, and therefore that the knowledge of them is unnecessary, and that the requiring confession is gratuitously inquisitorial? But if the minister of God is appointed a judge, is it not his bounden duty to administer justice as God would have him to do? Let me give you an illustration. Suppose one were to have gone to the Apostle St. John, and asked him to exercise in his regard the power which had been given to him for the relief of a sinful but penitent soul. In the confidence which would necessarily result from such a request, if the Apostle discovered that there was in the heart of his penitent a feeling of hatred against a neighbour, and a determination not to forgive, but to seek and insist upon revenge, what would he do but remind him of the essential obligation in the New Law of love, to be reconciled and to forgive from his heart, if he expected forgiveness himself. He would conjure him by the love of that Sacred Heart which he knew so well, and by that first cry of anguish which was heard from the cross asking for forgiveness for enemies, to lay aside feelings so unworthy of the follower of the meekest and humblest of men, and to be ready at once to do to another what he was expecting God to do to him. If such words, and from such lips, would, as they must, soften the heart towards feelings

\* Ps. vii.

of charity, gladly would the Apostle stretch his hand over the head of his penitent child, pronounce his pardon, and bid him to go and sin no more. But if his heart still continued hardened, and he would persist in his wicked determination, how could even St. John pretend to violate the law by which God Himself is regulated in forgiving sinners, inasmuch as He ever refuses mercy to those who will not show mercy nor forgive their brother from their heart! "Go, my child," might he say, "and pray for further strength. Think upon what you owe to God and to your own soul. I can only pronounce such a pardon as will be ratified in heaven by a merciful, but yet a just God. I must retain your sin, and withhold the forgiveness, until you come again with a heart moved by Grace toward your duty, and then I will gladly receive you once more amongst the friends of God." This would be the act and the language not of a judge only, but even of a father also. And thus must those act, whom God has appointed to sit in His tribunal in the ministry of the Church, with the alternative power of forgiving or retaining.

3. Look to those penitents whom the history of the Gospel brings before us, and you will see how an outward confession accompanied their sorrow, and preceded their reconciliation. The language of the Psalmist was the language of each one of them: *I said I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord, and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.\** When the Prodigal Son entered into himself, and resolved to return to his Father, he determined upon confessing to him how he had sinned, and his first words were those in which he acknowledged his guilt: *Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.†* See again the Magdalene who intrudes herself an uninvited guest into the house of the Pharisee, and by her tears outwardly demonstrates

\* Ps. xxi.

† Luke xv. 18.

even more forcibly than by words her sorrow for sin, for which she then receives so full an absolution. Another sinner is found when Jesus stands wearied at the well, and the Samaritan woman has the happiness of meeting Him there. He thirsts for her soul more than for the water which He asks at her hands, and He draws from her that full confession as the prelude of her pardon, which made her in thanksgiving and wonder bring others to Him, saying: *Come and see a man who has told me all things that I have ever done.\** So did the publican Zacheus not confess only, but declare his resolution of making the restitution which justice demanded, when he was touched with sorrow and resolved to amend the errors of his life. And at the last hour of our dear Lord's life, when agonizing on the Cross, He gained His last convert in the person of the penitent thief, it was after a confession of his sins and a prayer for mercy that he received the assurance that he was that very day to be admitted into Paradise. In all these cases, which might be multiplied if time would permit, there is a principle established, which gives a sanction to confession, and which prepares us to find it an essential condition on the part of those, who would seek for pardon through the ministry of that Church which Jesus Christ founded for the purpose of gaining souls to heaven.

4. Passing on to a later testimony of Sacred Scripture, we examine the writings and study the actions of the Apostles, and we find allusions to this practice of Confession, which shows that it was in use among these first followers of our Lord. In the first Epistle of St. John, we read these words: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to*

• John iv. 29.

*forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.\**

And St. James says, writing to those who well understood his meaning: *Confess your sins one to another.†*

And St. Paul declares that God *hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.‡* And in the Acts of the

Apostles we find a record of the practice, when it is stated that, being struck with fear at witnessing the miracles of St. Paul at Ephesus, *many of them that believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds.§* A

Catholic, my dear brethren, can in all these passages, especially through the light thrown upon them by the authoritative tradition of the Church, understand the existence of a reality which he sees now in daily practice.

I will not pretend to comment upon these passages, but simply claim for the Catholic what others claim for themselves, the right of interpreting the Word of God and following its teaching. I would only

add, that, if it is objected that St. James's order would make confession to each other, not to be limited to confession to the priests, he spoke to those who understood his words, and whom he had ordered only two

verses before to bring in the priests of the Church for a Sacramental administration. And when a mutual duty of one to another is prescribed, the relative position of the minister and the subject is not to be transgressed, according to the principle required by St.

Peter, who says: *As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, ||* and by St. Paul who even more clearly regulates how the unity of the

body of Christ in the Church is kept up by each using in his own sphere the gift that is given to him, *having different gifts according to the grace that is given to us*

*.....of ministry in ministering. ¶*

\* 1 John, i. 8. 9.

† James, v. 16.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 18.

§ Acts, xix. 18.

|| 1 Pet. iv. 10.

¶ Rom. xii. 6

5. And now, in bringing to a conclusion for this evening, a question to which I must return next Sunday, let me again ask how can the great Fact of the existence of Confession as a real and living institution be accounted for, if its origin be not Divine? Can man have introduced it, and brought it to that perfection that it manifests in the working of the Church? Could man have given to it that sacred and supernatural character which the very observance of the secret or seal of Confession proves to the universe, of which not a single violation has ever been recorded, notwithstanding the millions upon millions of confidences which have thus passed between man and his fellow-man? Could a man have invented it, I ask again and again? What man was he, and must he have been? If not invested with Divine power, he must have been bold, rash, and unwise in the extreme, in attempting what he never could have realized, and even cruel and tyrannical in imposing a yoke which no man could ever patiently submit to if imposed by another. Yet Confession does exist, and it must be accounted for. Would the collective Priesthood of the Church have invented it, even if they could? Speaking humanly, the Confessional affords to the Priest the heaviest and most anxious labour, for it requires a Grace and special help from on high, to bear him up during the fatigue of the many continuous hours in which he has to sit in his close retirement, listening to tales of sin and sorrow, as penitent after penitent comes to ask relief and pardon at his hands. Not only is it a labour, but oftentimes it is of the greatest danger to health and life; for at any hour of day or night, the Priest is ready and is bound to go the bedside of the dying, and runs the risk of inhaling the poison of a contagious disease, whilst he is bending down to receive the last Confession of a dying Christian. Gladly he does it, because it is the duty of a Good

Shepherd to lay down his life for his flock; but would he or could he do it, if it were not more than a natural feeling that led him on in his task of self-sacrificing love? Not laborious or dangerous only to the Priest is the work of the Confessional, but it is humiliating and doubly so to him. For he has to confess his own sins: and Bishops and Popes too must go on their knees, as the simplest child, and make known their own failings and ask for pardon from a fellow-priest. If Priests had invented such a work, would they have thus punished themselves in so many ways? And Kings and Emperors are bound to this duty also; and there must have been Kings and Emperors at the time of its introduction, who would not have tamely submitted to such a bending of human pride, if man had been its author and commander.

Would you know when the One existed who enjoined the precept and enforced the practice of Confession? It was long, long before the Council of Trent, because that Council only legislated on the practice, as already in full and well known working. It was long before the fourth Council of Lateran, in A.D. 1215; because there again the Church only regulated the periods at which Confession must be made, under the penalty of excommunication.\* It was before the time of St. Leo; because that great Pope in the beginning of the fifth century corrected an erroneous practice which was resorted to by some Bishops, of enforcing public Confession in many cases, in which he declares that private Confession to a Priest was all that was required.† It must have been before St. Cyprian,‡ who, A.D. 250, exhorts those who had fallen into even sins of thought, to confess them, whilst they still have life, because the pardon imparted by the priest is

\* Labbe Tom. xi. p. I. col. 173.

† Ep. cxxxvi.

‡ Serm. 5. de Lapsis.



accepted before God. It must have been before the days of Origen and Tertullian, A.D. 200; the former of whom, comparing the wicked with the just, declares that the wicked die in their sins, but the just obtain pardon from their failings, by going to the priest, imploring health and seeking to be purified through him.\* And Tertullian affords abundant matter for any sermon on Confession, and in his strong and nervous language conjures one who hesitates about his duty of Confession to ponder upon the flames of Hell, against which, after Baptism, Confession has been instituted as the safest preservative.† It must have been before St. Irenæus, A.D. 100, who records how some women who had been deceived by the heretic Mark, came to the Church and confessed their fault, whilst others who were ashamed to do so, renounced the faith in despair.‡ It must have been, and it was, even before the very Apostles themselves, because they, as exercising *the ministry of reconciliation*, did it, not through their own power, but because they acted with that power with which they had been invested for the good of souls, on that eventful day, when freshly risen from the tomb, with the evidences of His Divinity and the marks of His Humanity upon Him, the God-Man, the introducer of Confession, breathed upon them and said: *Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.*

Thus do we account for the Fact of Confession. It is not the invention of man; but it is indeed the order and the work of God.

\* Hom. x. in Num.      † De Pœnit c. 12.

‡ Adv. Hær. L. l. c. xiii.







LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXXI.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

No. 2.

*Satisfaction and Indulgences, &c.*



## LECTURE XXXI.

### THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

(No. 2.)

#### *Satisfaction and Indulgences, &c.*

The very great importance of the Sacrament of Penance which I am now explaining to you, has compelled me to divide the subject into two Lectures, in order that I might not be reduced to the necessity of compressing the matter too closely, or of intruding to an undue extent upon your time and patience. I have made a certain progress in the explanation, and before pursuing our course, I will remind you of what that progress has been. I have shown to you that Penance has the three acknowledged requisites of a Sacrament; namely, an outward sign, an inward Grace, and the institution of Christ. I also pointed out to you what were the three acts required on the part of the penitent, as constituting the *matter* of the Sacrament, and these are Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction; the *form* consisting in the words of absolution pronounced by the Minister. After describing to you briefly what is the nature of that sorrow which is called Contrition, I dwelt with more fulness on the second act, Confession; and showed to you by direct and indirect arguments, that it is divinely instituted as an essential part of the Sacrament. There is so much that I should still wish to say upon this point, that I must return to it before I close this evening. But before I run the risk of fatiguing you, whilst I hope your minds are fresh and

you can command a patient attention, I will commence by fulfilling the promise I made upon Sunday last, of speaking to you upon the third part of Penance, Satisfaction, and of explaining the consequent doctrine of Indulgences.

I. 1. I will begin as usual by defining what is meant by Satisfaction. It means that action by which one who has injured another, makes the requisite compensation for the injury. Such an action necessarily and naturally follows from sorrow for a misdeed. In your mutual intercourse with each other, if you happen to injure your neighbour in his name or property, your sense of charity and justice will prompt to you, that you ought not only to ask his pardon, but be willing also to make good the harm which you have done him. The law of honour, also, though it is often very unduly enforced, serves to illustrate what is meant by demanding Satisfaction for an insult or a wrong. Does God demand Satisfaction from us when we have offended Him by Sin? Sin is a violation of a law; and the breach of a law does imply the necessity of Satisfaction. Whenever then there is sorrow for sin, that sorrow cannot be pronounced sincere, unless there be a readiness to make to God the Satisfaction or compensation which He demands. It is for this reason that Satisfaction is an integral part of the Sacrament of Penance; and that as true sorrow or Contrition leads to an acknowledgment or Confession of the evil which we have done, so does it also imply that we are willing to make the compensation which may be required at our hands. Hence it is that, as you have already been told, Penance has its three acts of Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction. When God in His Mercy forgives our sin, He does in His Justice require Satisfaction, as in accordance with the teaching of the Church I will proceed to demonstrate.

2. It is quite certain from what we know of the

dealings of God with those who have sinned against Him, that when in His Mercy He forgives the sin and removes its guilt from the soul, and the eternal punishment due to it, He oftentimes inflicts some temporal punishment, and requires it to be submitted to in Satisfaction for the injury which sin has offered to His Majesty and Law. One general illustration which I can give of this law is to be found in our very selves. We are members of a fallen race, and children of parents who sinned against God. We believe that God has forgiven that original Sin, and has remitted its eternal punishment through that Mystery of Redemption, by which we have been bought at a Great Price, and have again received our claim to the inheritance of Heaven. But are not the trials and sorrows of this life, which we rightly call a vale of tears, and the great reality of death which is to come at the end of all of them, a proof brought home intimately and too keenly to every one of us, that we must suffer tribulation whilst still in the flesh, but that it is *through these many tribulations that we are to enter into the kingdom of God?*\* We see this principle acted upon also in the conduct of God towards King David, especially upon two great occasions upon which he had sinned, but had supplicated for and obtained pardon. When he had committed the great sins of adultery and murder, the Prophet Nathan was sent to rebuke him, and moved him to Contrition. When the king, touched with sorrow, confessed his sin, crying out in the anguish of his soul, *I have sinned against the Lord,*† Nathan said to him, assuring him of pardon: *the Lord also hath taken away thy sin.* There was the removal of his sin, and its eternal punishment; but was no temporal Satisfaction demanded? Yes, and a bitter one, which cost David many tears and the deepest woe;

\* Acts xiv. 21.

† 2 Kings xii. 13.



for the prophet added: *the child that is born to thee shall surely die.\** When again, a little later through a movement of vanity, he caused his people to be numbered, and was afterwards filled with sorrow for his act, and begged for pardon, the Prophet Gad is sent to him to give him his choice of three works of Satisfaction, famine, war, or pestilence.† These facts are quite sufficient to establish a principle in answer to those who falsely teach, that when God forgives sin, He remits it so perfectly that He does not require any temporal Satisfaction.

3. The Church further teaches that the debt of temporal Satisfaction due to God may be paid, if God so will, by the performance of those good works to which a pre-eminence is always given in Scripture, Prayer, Fasting and Alms-deeds. Of this fact we have evidence in the book of Jonas the Prophet, where the threat was issued by God that for the sins of Nineveh, He would within forty days destroy that great city. But when upon their fasting and prayer the people showed the sincerity of their sorrow, God was satisfied, and He averted that temporal punishment which He had conditionally threatened to inflict.‡ So, when the Prophet Daniel exhorted the proud and wicked Nabuchodonosor to take steps by which he might move God to have mercy, and to avert from him the awful visitation which was impending over him, he knew God's ways of accepting Satisfaction, and stated them when he said: *O King, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor: perhaps He will forgive thine offences.§* These works of Satisfaction, which the Church in accordance with the spirit of the Sacred Scriptures recommends so constantly and

\* 2 Kings, xii. 14.

† 2 Kings xxiv. 12.

‡ Jonas iii. 10.

§ Dan. iv. 24.

often imposes authoritatively upon us, are in themselves most fitting as offerings from ourselves to God. Prayer is a tribute of the soul, Fasting of the body, and Alms-deeds of our external goods, and thus we offer to God all that we are, and that we can influence. The offering may be voluntary, it may be done under counsel; or it may be imposed upon us by the authority of the Church, by virtue of that power of *binding* which has been committed to her. Acting in the name of God and with His authority, when she looses us from our sins, she may bind us with an obligation of doing those works which the Justice of God demands, and which His Mercy so readily accepts.

4. Hence it is that in the Sacrament of Penance, which is the ministerial act of conveying God's pardon to the soul, the third part is Satisfaction, without which the Sacrament would not be entire, nor could the dispositions of the penitent be pronounced to be sincere. And this doctrine and practice of Satisfaction thus constantly brought before us, shows us that blending of the two attributes of God manifested in His dealings towards sin. If in His justice He always remembers mercy, so are we reminded that whilst we are creatures of His mercy, we are also deservedly objects of His justice, and that we must not too easily quiet ourselves with regard to sin forgiven.\* We are also hereby more securely preserved against the danger of relapsing into sin, whilst we are still, in the penitential spirit of the Psalmist, always keeping our sins before us.† And the greatness and consequences of sin are more deeply impressed upon us, when out of our very soul and body and substance we are paying its penalty, than can be the case with those who so easily forget what they think has to them been so easily forgiven. The recollection and fear of the future punishment due to sin is

\* Eccclus. v. 5.

† Ps. 1 5.

also held before us by the present punishment to which we willingly submit, and this fear will contribute to found and form us in wisdom.\* In imposing works of Satisfaction, the ministers of the Sacrament of Penance are not to act arbitrarily; but as their act is judicial, they are to be regulated by justice and prudence. In the earlier ages of the Church, severe penitential works were imposed by law on certain sins, and were provided for in the Canons of the Church. This is admitted in the Communion Service in the Book of Common Prayer, where the practice is spoken of approvingly, and is declared to have been enforced in order "that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord."

5. To those who so groundlessly object that the Catholic doctrine of Satisfaction is injurious to the Cross of Christ, and that it is a virtual denial of the infinite value of the Merits of Christ, this explanation of our doctrine must, I think, afford a sufficient answer. They quite misunderstand what is meant by the Merits of Christ being infinite. Nothing short of infinite can satisfy God for the debt of *eternal* punishment due to sin, and so the infinite Merits of Christ were required, were offered, and were accepted. But something short of infinite can, through the goodness of God, atone for the temporal punishment also due for sin, and this, through the grace of God, we can offer to Him. So the infinite Merits of Christ have reference to the eternal, as our finite works of satisfaction have reference to the temporal punishment. The latter do not contradict or make void the former, for each have their own sphere. And what is of great importance to observe is, that our works of Satisfaction themselves are of no avail unless they are offered in union with the merits of Christ, to which alone they owe their value. So

far then from the Catholic doctrine of Satisfaction offering any contradiction to those isolated passages from St. Paul, in which our opponents urge the all-sufficiency of the Redemption of Christ, which we admit much more really than they do, it shows us the noble spirit of that apostle, who, with all his confidence in such a Great Price, offered up constant works of Satisfaction, as he testifies. Who else but a Catholic can understand what he means when he says: *I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway* :\* or those others which must mean something unintelligible to such opponents: *I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things which are wanting in the sufferings of Christ* ? †

II. This explanation of the doctrine of Satisfaction will serve to make perfectly intelligible to you the Catholic doctrine of Indulgences, a doctrine totally misunderstood and grossly misrepresented by the enemies of the Church. The doctrine is briefly this. As the Church by her power of *binding* can, as I have shown you, impose works of satisfaction by reason of the temporal debt due to God, so by her power of *loosing*, can she also relax in these works. Such relaxation is an Indulgence. When, then, the Creed of Pope Pius IV. declares : " I also affirm that the power of Indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people," it asserts a truth which is well-founded in Scripture, and which has been always held in practice in the Church. The proposition is twofold, first that the Power has been left in the Church ; and secondly that the use of this power is wholesome. Let me say a word upon both of these statements.

1. That the power of relaxing temporal punishment

\* 1 Cor ix. 27.

† Col. i. 24.

due to sin exists in the Church, follows from the general word used by our dear Lord in conferring on the Apostles the power to be exercised in reference to sin. *WHATSOEVER you shall bind, &c., or loose, &c.\** It is a maxim that where the law makes no distinction, neither are we to make a distinction. And if our dear Lord in His generosity has left such an ample power in the Church, it is not for us to limit what has been given for our own good, but to accept it with thankfulness. And the Church, in using this power, follows the guidance of the Spirit of God, and imitates the example which He has vouchsafed to set for her clemency. When He threatened destruction to the city of Nineveh, He threatened a temporal punishment, but when in lieu thereof He accepted the penitential works of the people of that city, He really granted them an indulgence by relaxing the punishment. And as the Church acts ministerially for God, she has the power of extending in His name similar relaxations. There is a distinct instance of the use of this power by St. Paul, as we read in his two Epistles to the Corinthians, in the first of which he orders the imposition of an outward penitential course, and in the second relaxes it. For in 1 Cor. v. he expresses his horror at the crime of incest into which a member of the Church of Corinth had fallen, and he orders him to be delivered over to Satan, that is to say, to be separated from communion with the faithful, and to be subjected to a great calamity with the express view, that the *Spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*,† which is always the intention of the Church in imposing satisfactory works. And in this Second Epistle, written probably only a few months later, having heard that the penitent had shown signs of

\* Matt. xviii. 18.

† 1 Cor. v. 5. Compare also 1 Tim. i. 20, where the Apostle uses the same expression.

the deepest sorrow, and fearing that he might be driven to despair, being *swallowed up by over much sorrow*, he orders him to be restored to communion, and declares that he pardons him in the person of Christ.\* This is a precise fact in proof of the declaration of our Creed, that the power of Indulgences has been left by Christ in the Church.

2. That the use of Indulgences is most wholesome to Christian people, follows of course from the fact of Christ having left them for the benefit of His children. For in Indulgences we are always experiencing that attribute of mercy, used ministerially in our regard, by the representative of a merciful God. Let them only be understood, and none can doubt their benefit, nor would any then bring against our tender mother the Church the imputations which they allege in ignorance. And after the explanation which I have given, it cannot be necessary for me to answer the cruel and most unjust charge brought against us, that an Indulgence implies leave to commit sin, inasmuch as its whole province is to shorten the period of penance which the Church herself has imposed as a punishment of sin. For she never grants an Indulgence except on the express condition that there is sorrow for the sin, and a determination to avoid it for the future. What can be more wholesome than a course of mercy, which encourages such sorrow, and inspires such a determination? But, it may be asked, when the Church grants an Indulgence of forty days, or a year, or any specified time, does not that imply permission to sin during such a period? If those who suggest such an unholy idea, only knew a little more of the history of the Christianity which they pretend to profess, we might be spared the trouble of giving an answer to a question which would not then be asked. An Indulgence of forty days,



or a year, has no reference to a future time of such a period; but it is a grant, that if the dispositions of the soul are what they ought to be, the same spiritual benefit will be bestowed, as if one had undergone that period of a penitential course, and had thus satisfied for an equivalent debt of temporal punishment. A plenary Indulgence, on the same principle, signifies the total remission of the temporal punishment due to our sins. I have already referred to the admission made in the Communion service in the Book of Common Prayer, as to the ancient discipline of the Church. The words there used will best suit the present purpose of explaining the meaning of a limited or plenary Indulgence. "Brethren, in the Primitive Church there was a godly discipline, that at the beginning of Lent, such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance, and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord," &c. This open penance was sometimes imposed for seven days, or a month, or the forty days of Lent, or a year, or more, or sometimes to be continued throughout life. When the inward sorrow of the penitents was very acute, and there was sufficient reason brought home to the authorities of the Church, that the course might be shortened, its severity mitigated, or altogether remitted, indulgence was extended, (as St. Paul extended it to his Corinthian penitent), and hence the name and reality of a partial or plenary Indulgence. Remission was also oftentimes given through the request of the martyrs who were going out to profess the faith, which some of these penitents had been the occasion of bringing into disrepute, or which they had denied before persecutors. Such indulgences are actually legislated for in the Canons of the First General Council of Nicæa,\* which proves that not the imposition of open penance only,

\* Labbe Tom. ii. pp. 34, 35.



but its relaxation also was "a goldly discipline in the Primitive Church." How this temporal satisfaction and its relaxation by an indulgence affects the next world, and how beautifully harmonious and strictly consistent is the Church's teaching on this point, will form matter for instruction, when I explain in a later Lecture the doctrine of Purgatory.

III. I have now, my dear brethren, explained to you what the Church teaches upon this beautiful institution of God's mercy, the Sacrament of Penance. In its three parts, Contrition, Confession, Satisfaction, you see how perfectly it is fitted for its work of removing sin, and bringing back Grace and peace to the soul. Strange, indeed, and more than strange is it, for it is grievous and harrowing to those who have experienced all the realities of such a blessing, that there should be those who disbelieve in the existence of such an evidence of the love of Him who came upon earth to call sinners to repentance and pardon. But if it was the case that the works of our dear Lord were misunderstood when He was upon earth, and that the very fact of His pardoning sinners exposed Him over and over again to charges of blasphemy upon the part of those very creatures whom He had come to save, so that they even crucified Him and put Him to death, no wonder that the Church in continuing His work of mercy, finds adversaries also, who try by misrepresentation to paralyse all her efforts in behalf of sinful and suffering man! I reserve advisedly until a later period, when I will try to systematize the objections brought against the Church, and show how strictly identical they are with those brought against our Blessed Lord Himself, the difficulties which are raised against this Sacrament of Penance. Let me only observe here that those who object to it, and especially to Confession, are not those who understand the Sacra-

ment, but those who simply know not what they say. If they think that Confession encourages sin because it affords a means of pardon, let them only make the experiment of a Confession; let them prepare for it, examine their conscience (if they know even what that means), make their acts of sincere contrition, form a firm purpose of amendment, be willing to make known not their sins only, but the occasions which have led them into sin, and then let them dare to say that this salutary process, even abstracting from its sacramental reality, encourages them in what it is so well adapted to correct. Or if they ask, how can man forgive sin? let them observe that such a question aims at once at the whole ministerial office in the Church. Man can do, as a minister of God, exactly what God destines him to do; and if God at any time said to any of His ministers, *Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven them*; such ministers must have had the power of forgiving. Man does not do it of his own power, but simply uses an authority which God gives to him as His representative. Or if pretending to take a far higher stand, the adversary to Confession declares that he confesses to God immediately and not to man, does this mean that he ever confesses at all? The only mode of confessing to God which He will accept, is that which He has Himself instituted; and we confess to God most truly, when we confess to those whom God has appointed to act in His name.

But we must address ourselves more directly to those who admit the authority of the Book of Common Prayer, and yet object to the practice of Confession. What can they mean by objecting to this practice, when in their authorised book they grant the power of absolving to the minister, and impose the duty of confessing upon the penitent at the most awful of all hours, the hour of death? For in the Ordination Service, when the Bishop is ordaining a Priest, he is com-

manded to impose hands upon him, and to say: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven: and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained," &c. Does this rite, and do these words mean anything or no? If not, where is the honesty and meaning of those who use them? If they do mean anything, why are we censured because we really use for the benefit of the people a power which is not unmeaning in our case? And in the Visitation of the Sick, after the sick man has been moved to make a special confession of his sins, the priest pronounces upon him these words: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: *and by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*" This is not from a Catholic Ritual, but from the Common Prayer Book used by those ministers of the Church established by law in this country, some of whom will not hesitate to stand upon platforms before an unbelieving audience, and ridicule the Church of Rome, because she practises what she preaches, and acts upon the principle that the power of absolving sinners has been committed to the Church, and that the ministers may therefore pronounce the words of absolution over a penitent sinner. Ought not such unfaithful and inconsistent teachers to be brought before the tribunals of God and man, inasmuch as they prevent the Glory of the One, and bring ruin to the other, by pretending to be ministers, and yet denying everything ministerial? For has not the power which has been left in the Church been given for the very benefit of those poor

sinner whom Jesus especially came to call, and whom He has entrusted as sacred pledges to those on whom has devolved St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation? If confession and a claim to the power of absolving be deemed a superstition, why does this book recommend it at the hour of death? Is that the time of all others for acts of superstition, when the soul is balancing upon the point of eternity, and is about to undergo that fearful reality of *falling into the hands of the Living God*.<sup>\*</sup> Or if it is useful at the hour of death, it is for that reason on the soundest Christian principle, useful during life. For a Christian ought to live as he would wish to die, and ought during life to keep himself in that innocence which he wishes to recover at death. For the power of absolving, which is here admitted, cannot by any possible distortion of the words conferring it, be considered as limited to its exercise in case only of those who are dying. Is confession, and the receiving of absolution at the hour of death an advantage, or is it not? If not, why is it ordered? If it is, then suppose a person die suddenly, or be killed by an accident, the soul passes into eternity without the advantage which confession would have given; and so the way to secure this benefit is by doing what the solicitude of the Catholic Church enjoins, to have recourse to it frequently during life, and thus to recover lost innocence, and to secure against future falls. Moreover, there is on this point a salutary caution given by St. Augustine, who says that those who do not confess during life, will not even understand how to do it at the time of death. Wonderful is it not, then, that the Protestant Church objects to the Catholic doctrine of Confession, and yet the Protestant authorised Prayer Book declares that *the minister has the*

<sup>\*</sup> • Heb. x. 31.

*power of absolving, and that confession is much to be recommended at the very hour of death!*

The hour of Death! and after Death comes the Judgment.\* And what answer is to be given, when God shall rise in judgment, by those who have neglected and denied this ministerial agency of Mercy? How is it to fare with the soul, which is to stand covered and defiled by sins, in the awful presence of the God of Holiness! And yet these sins might have been remitted, by the means specially ordained for the purpose by that God, who during life shows Himself to be a God of Mercy, but after death the God of Justice. Hear what He says through the Prophet Ezechiel, to those who despise Him in life, upon the judgment which awaits them hereafter: *Now an end is come upon thee, and I will send my wrath upon thee, and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and I will set all thy abominations against thee, and my eye shall not spare thee, and I will show thee no pity...and you shall know that I am the Lord.*† What sins will not be revealed at such a judgment, sins uncanceled because unconfessed, and unconfessed because the pride of human reason has been unwilling to accept what the very condescension of Divine Mercy had vouchsafed to institute as a cure for the misery and waywardness of man! What sins? Sins of childhood long since forgotten, because never brought before the mind in self-examination, forgotten by us, but not forgotten nor forgiven by God. Sins of youth, that fruitful season of forgetfulness and disobedience—sins from which the Psalmist begged a special remission.‡ Sins of manhood, when the neglect and failings of earlier years had ripened into

\* Heb. ix. 27.

† Ezech. vii. 3. 4.

‡ Remember not the sins of my youth. Ps. xxiv.

constant habits of forgetfulness and sin. Sins of omission of conscious and well-known duties. Sins of others, which we have occasioned and brought about by becoming a tempter of weaker brethren. Sins, in a word, which it almost makes the head dizzy to think upon, owing to their number, their greatness, and the circumstances which have increased their malice. They are to appear upon that day in all their reality and enormity, when the soul, unshriven and unabsolved, stands before God, and sees what it has become by the want of Confession, and knows what it might have been through that blessing. And God in His Judgment will charge that soul with its pride and ingratitude. You stand before Me, will He say, with the weight of your iniquities upon you, and were unwilling to come during life to be refreshed and unburdened. And yet I had instituted a means for that very purpose, and you knew of it. I had said to My Apostles, breathing into them My own Spirit and investing them with an authority of Mercy: *Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven*, and therefore the means were always at your reach, but you questioned My Wisdom, you doubted My Power, and you denied the force of My Love. *To the sinner God hath said: Why dost thou declare My Justices, and take My Covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hast hated discipline, and hast cast My Words behind thee....these things thou hast done, and I was silent. Thou thoughtest unjustly that I should be like to thee: but I will reprove thee, and set before thy face. Understand these things you that forget God, lest He snatch you away, and there be none to deliver you.\** Such is the curse denounced by the Psalmist upon the forgetful and wilful sinner. Rather let yours be the blessing which he elsewhere enregisters in behalf of those, who bring home to

\* Ps. xlix.

themselves the knowledge of their sins and obtain their pardon by Confession. *I said: I will confess against myself, my injustice to the Lord, and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.\** The choice between these two alternatives is in your own hands. Choose wisely, for Eternity depends upon the choice.

\* Ps. xxi. 5.





LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXXII.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

No. 1.

*Real Presence.*



## LECTURE XXXII.

### THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

(No. 1.)

#### *Real Presence.*

This evening I am to speak to you upon the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist. It is a subject which always presents itself to the Catholic soul in such a manner as to excite feelings of enthusiasm and love. It is hard to reason coolly upon it, as it is always hard to reason coolly when the feelings are carried away by an impulse which they cannot resist. Nor would God have us to resist feelings which He Himself excites. How can we be devoid of all feeling, when we have to stand forward and defend God against His own creatures, and in His own immediate and sacred Presence! Catholics know what I mean, and can enter into my most inward sentiments. Let them only breathe a prayer, that whilst I am speaking, He who is in the midst of us under the sacramental veil, may become unveiled and be brought home to those who know Him not; so that at the end of my words, when our dearest Lord will vouchsafe to be exposed for our adoration, and will bestow His Blessing upon us, there may be more to acknowledge His Presence, and fewer of whom it shall be said, that *He came to His own and His own received Him not.\** And if, whilst others pray, I may appear to be pleading with unwonted earnestness a cause

\* John i. 11.

which it is impossible for a Priest to plead without being somewhat carried away by such a subject, I can appeal to precedents which will justify an animation which it is not easy to control. St. John Baptist was not cool when he had to reproach the unbelieving Pharisees for blinding themselves against the knowledge of the Messiah who was amongst them, and said:—*There hath stood in the midst of you One whom you know not.\** Nor was St. Paul cool, when he had to rebuke the Athenians in the Areopagus for their ignorance of that *Unknown God*,† whom he was sent to preach to them. Nor again was St. Peter cool and unmoved, when with the gift of the Holy Spirit freshly come upon him and overflowing in his soul, he went forth from the upper chamber, and spake boldly to the assembled multitudes in Jerusalem, upon the Divinity of that Jesus whom *by the hands of wicked men they had crucified and slain.‡*

I begin, then, by unburthening these feelings at once: these thoughts must be spoken—let them be spoken at once. I cannot apologize for being fervid, if I shall be so. I will endeavour to yield to your wishes, and reason as closely and speak as clearly as I can, for I have to explain a Mystery of Faith; but you must bear with me too, for I have also to defend a Mystery of Love.

I. To shew to you that this is not mere sentiment, but that I am speaking to you upon a truth of Faith, I will explain and prove the Catholic Doctrine in the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist. But I must first state it. The Creed of Pope Pius IV. which I am still defending, besides merely numbering the Eucharist amongst the Seven Sacraments, thus expressly declares upon this subject: “I profess likewise that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in the

\* John i. 26.

† Acts xvii. 23.

‡ Acts ii. 23.

most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really and substantially the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood; which conversion the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation. I also confess that under either kind alone Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament." Thus there are three great points to be insisted on in our explanation. First: the Sacrifice of the Mass. Second: the Real Presence and Transubstantiation. Third: Communion under one kind. The second of these involves the great reality, and contains within it the reason of the first and third. Therefore I will urge it first, and that will occupy our attention this evening. We will attend to the other two questions on Sunday next.

1. The Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist, in the first place, has the three requisites of a Sacrament; namely, an outward sign, an inward Grace, and the institution of Christ. The outward sign are the Bread and Wine, which represent and symbolize the food and support which are afforded to the soul of him who receives worthily. The inward Grace is that life and union, which it is the very object of this Sacrament to effect, as our dear Lord says : *He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me;*\* and again : *He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in Him.*† And the institution of Christ is found in the acts and words of our dear Lord at His Last Supper. In arguing with ordinary Protestants we need say no more upon this matter, as they agree that it is a Sacrament, and that it must therefore have these necessary requisites.

2. But the great point which we have to defend is

\* John vi. 53.

† John vi. 57.

the doctrine of the Real Presence and Transubstantiation. For what we believe is, that the words of consecration used by the Minister in this Sacrament, effect the same change as was effected by our Blessed Lord at the Last Supper; and that the real, true, living Body of Jesus Christ, the same that was born of the Virgin Mary, that suffered and died for us, and that rose again and is now in heaven, becomes actually present. This is what we mean by the Real Presence. Also, that the *substance* of the Bread (that is to say that inward reality which is hidden from our senses, and which exists under the outward visible appearance of bread) is changed into the substance of the Body of Christ; and the substance of Wine in like manner, into the substance of His Blood. This is what is called Transubstantiation, or the changing of Substance. Under the form of Bread is present therefore, not the substance of bread, but the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord; and precisely the same under the form of Wine. Moreover, we believe and teach that the outward appearance, called also the *accidents* of Bread and Wine remain unchanged, though the substance has been changed. It is necessary thus to define our doctrine, and the recollection of this definition will aid us in answering objections which may be adduced. The doctrine may be hard to understand, as Mysteries always are, but it is not hard to believe, when we consider the evidence which supports it.

II. Turning to the Sacred Scriptures, we find this evidence strongly brought before us, and so strongly that it is astonishing to us how those who believe in the Scripture, and who know the immensity of the love of our dearest Lord, can doubt or deny the truth of the Real Presence. There are three classes of texts to which I will call your attention. The first tells us of the promise of this Blessed Sacrament: the second records the fact of its institution: the third its use.



1. The promise is very fully and distinctly enregistered in the 6th Chapter of St. John, in which our dear Lord treats with His disciples as the Church deals with children who are being prepared for their first Communion, in announcing to them some time beforehand the happiness for which they are to prepare. And thus we shall see that at the Last Supper the words of the Institution, and the fact of receiving Holy Communion at that time did not come suddenly upon the Apostles, for they had been prepared by the promise so distinctly made, and most probably often repeated in the unrecorded conferences which took place between our Lord and His followers. Read the whole chapter here alluded to, in order that you may understand its spirit and teaching. The first fifteen verses record the miracle of feeding five thousand persons with five loaves, and the great impression made by this miracle. Especially we must note that even after the five loaves had done their wondrous work, it is stated that there had been only five all along: He distributed five loaves, (v. 11) and the twelve baskets of fragments were the fragments of the five loaves (v. 13). In the 26th verse commences an address made by our Lord on the next day, having relation to the miracle of the loaves. He urges the necessity of faith in Him, and passes on towards the end of His address, to speak of a future blessing He had in store for them, when He would give them His own Flesh to eat sacramentally under the form of bread: *the Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world.* (v. 52). And when His enemies, the Jews, asked: *How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?* (v. 53). He continues in these clear terms: *Amen, Amen, I say unto you, except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you, &c., &c.* So that when His enemies understood His words literally, as the only way in which they could be understood, He does not

explain that He is only speaking figuratively of believing in Him, but He repeats over and over again in six verses the necessity of actually eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood. When Nicodemus\* took too literally the order which our dear Lord gave of being born again, and asked how it could be done, He explained that He spoke of being *born again of water and the Holy Ghost*. But in the present case, to show that He means literally what He declared was to be done, He does not give an explanation of any figure that He was using, but repeats more strongly the Words He had previously used. And there are two melancholy confirmatory facts recorded in support of His meaning literally what He said, and referring to the future institution of this Great Sacrament. The first is the fact that those who would not believe in the Real Presence left Him. *Many of His Disciples went back and walked with Him no more.* (v. 67.) And the next fact is that to which our dear Lord makes a sudden transition at the end of the chapter, where He foretels the treason of Judas, which was to be consummated after an unworthy Communion on the very night of the Institution.

2. Now from the words of Promise, let us pass on to the words of Institution. We have this fact recorded by the Evangelists SS. Matthew, Mark and Luke. Let me cite the account given by St. Matthew. *And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed and broke, and gave to His Disciples, and said: Take ye and eat: This is My Body. And taking the chalice He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this: For this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins.†* It almost seems to be profane and to be a questioning

\* John iii.

† Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.

of the wisdom of our dear Lord, to add a word of ours to enforce the meaning of His words. You know, or at least we Catholics know, that we are oftentimes taunted by those who deny the truth of our doctrines, with departing from the Scriptures in controverted questions, and appealing in our defence to Tradition, Reason, or some other source, external to the written word of God. I will not go out of my way to answer this taunt. But in the present question of the Real Presence, who is it that has Scripture on his side; and who is it that is obliged to leave Scripture, and appeal to other sources in order to explain away what is stated in the clearest, simplest, and strongest words? The Catholic says: I believe in the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, because Our Lord declared this Presence in the clearest language. He took Bread, and said: This is My Body. We believe it is His Body, because He said so. We want no further proof, for His words are truth and Life. The Protestant says it cannot be, because human reason finds a difficulty in it; and thus it is *he* that leaves Scripture and appeals to reason. We are ready to meet them on any ground. But remember what is at issue: we are the defenders of Scripture, they are the assailants. They say that what our dear Lord says cannot be true: we say that it *is* true. They appeal to reason for difficulties: we appeal to the words of our Lord for the fact, as an answer to those difficulties. They pretend to prescribe a limit to the power of God in the Sacrament: we show that there is no limit either to His Power or His Love. And *supposing* only, that the Catholic doctrine were true: we say that we should not wish to alter a single phrase or word, or to express the truth more clearly, simply, or forcibly, than it is already expressed. Give us the power to form a Scripture text just to suit our purpose of proving, that in the Blessed Sacrament under the appearance of Bread, there is truly present the Body of

our Lord, we could not possibly frame one stronger than the one we already possess. *Jesus took Bread... and said... This is My Body.* Can they who oppose us say the same? And if we, in our turn, attend to arguments from reason, it is that we may show, as we fearlessly maintain we can show, that reason cannot overthrow Scripture and the teaching of our Lord upon this point. If we appeal to the venerable voice of Tradition, it is to show how true the testimony of antiquity is to our Lord's declaration. And if we appeal to the contradictions of those who deny this truth, it is that we may show how foolish is that human and worldly wisdom which pretends to set itself up against the Revelation of God. Therefore in appealing to the words of the Institution of the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist, we simply state what our dear Lord declared. He took Bread and said: *This is My Body.* He took wine and said, *This is My Blood.* Hence we believe the declaration in Scripture, that in this Holy Sacrament the Body and Blood of our Lord are really present.

3. As the promise pointed to this Institution as a future blessing, so we have a record after its Institution of its existing reality. In I. Cor. we have two passages of St. Paul in which he alludes to the existence and use of this Sacrament, and clearly asserts the doctrine of the Real Presence. Let me read the passages, reminding you of the context. In chap. x., the Apostle is cautioning against idolatry, and shows how much greater is the blessing given in the Christian religious rites, than in those of the heathens or Jews, and asks: *The Cup of blessing which we bless is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ, and the Bread which we break is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?*\* Here the actual Presence and receiving of the Body and

\* 1. Cor. x. 16.

Blood of Christ are clearly denoted. But in the next chapter occurs a stronger and an awful saying. Exhorting to a worthy Communion, and denouncing the crime of an unworthy Communion, the Apostle first gives the account of the Institution, as he had received it and as we read it in the Evangelists, and sums up and concludes in these words: *Therefore whosoever shall eat this Bread, or drink the Chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself; and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord.\** The Catholic Church takes these words again in their true and literal meaning, and uses them in her exhortations upon this Blessed Sacrament, just as St. Paul did. She conjures her children to remember the great work for which they prepare, when they are approaching to Holy Communion; she bids them come with consciences free from sin, and therefore to prove themselves and examine if sin be present, and to remove it by the special Sacrament designed for that end, so that Confession is an ordinary preparatory act before Holy Communion. She reminds them of that awful Presence before which the Angels bow down in adoration, and begs them to spare and not to profane that Body which was given, and that Precious Blood which was shed for them; and thus by discerning and acknowledging the Presence of the Body of our Lord, to receive it worthily and not to their own judgment. I appeal to every child and every convert who has been instructed for his first communion, whether this denunciation of St. Paul is not always held before them for their guidance and caution. But how is the Body of the Lord to be discerned, if it be not present? And who else but those who know how to discern that

\* 1 Cor. xi. 27, 28, 29.

Presence, can find within them an echo to the thrilling words of the Apostle?

Thus then do we argue upon these passages of Sacred Scripture, which we see to be so closely and practically connected together. The solemn words of the Institution stand midway between the promise and the use, showing the fulfilment of the one and justifying the caution to be observed in the other. When, then, our dearest Lord at that last meeting of Himself with the twelve, having loved them throughout life and loving them to the end, took the Bread into His Hands, and reminding them of the promise He had once made, that bread was to become His Flesh which He would give for the life of the world, the Apostles anticipated the act, and not only believed, but were filled with love towards the Mystery which was fulfilled, when He pronounced the words of consecration at that first Mass, and said: *This is My Body*. It became at once the Mystery of Faith and the Mystery of Love. Well, therefore, might every Apostle stand round and screen that sacred treasure, and conjure every faithful child to approach with veneration, and never dare to profane the Body and Blood which had been given and shed for them, for such a profanation would turn to their own judgment! And so we conclude in the words which St. Cyril of Jerusalem spoke 1500 years ago, for they exactly express the mind of every Catholic: "Since then He Himself has declared and said of the Bread, *This is My Body*, who shall dare doubt any longer? And since He has affirmed and said, *This is My Blood*, who shall ever hesitate saying that it is not His Blood?"\* So clear is the testimony of Scripture that it can only be obscured by an effort on the part of man to throw doubt on the teaching of God. We repeat, then that if the Catholic doctrine be true,

\* St. Cyril Catech. Lect. xxii. Oxford Translation. p. 270.



(as it is), we have everything in Scripture that we could wish in support of it. If the opposite were true, then Scripture must be admitted to be in error.

III. In further proof of the Divine Institution of the Blessed Eucharist, and especially of the Real Presence of our Lord in this Sacrament, we adduce the *Fact* that it is admitted as a recognised truth and reality not by Catholics only, as it has been universally by them for ever, but even by many of the enemies of the Church, who had separated from her in early ages, and have borne towards her that persecuting and vindictive spirit, which the enemies of our Lord bore towards Him, and which truth has always had to experience at the hands of error. For upon this point too we may urge the testimony which we urged in support of Confession, that its acknowledged existence must be accounted for by some principle or other. Some bold controversialist did not hesitate to say that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was first propounded by the Abbot St. Paschasius Radbert in the ninth century, and this assertion has been repeated by that numerous class of opponents to the Church, who are always so ready to believe every charge, however heedlessly made against her. Even this is granting an existence of a thousand years to a doctrine so widely spread, so thoroughly believed, and so deeply valued and loved. A sanction of a thousand years is an apparent evidence of truth; but how can it be accounted for, that the Greek Church and early Heretical Churches have taught and believed the same? Would they, with that spirit of hatred against the Church of Rome, which from the time of their separation they have always shown, and show so actively now in their persecution in Russia and Poland, have borrowed from her a human institution of such a character?

If the doctrine is said to be incomprehensible, that



is a presumption against its being of human institution. But positive testimonies of the Fathers of every age, even up to the Apostolic times, have by the providence of God been preserved to us, which ought to honest minds to be at once and abundantly decisive. Long indeed, and very long before the ninth century did Fathers and Saints and Councils, teach, defend, and legislate upon this deep Mystery of Love. These collected testimonies might fill, and have filled volumes,\* to the confusion, even if not to the satisfaction of those unbelievers, who would so shamefully deny the venerable origin of this article of our Faith. Let me cite only two or three as examples. St. John Chrysostom, in the beginning of the fifth century, impressing upon the people of Antioch the holiness with which they ought to approach to this holy Sacrament, uses words which none but a Catholic can appreciate and understand. "How perfectly pure ought not he to be who assists at such a Sacrifice! Brighter than the very sunbeam ought that hand to be which divides this Flesh, the mouth which is filled with this spiritual fire, and the tongue which is reddened by this most awful Blood!.....What the angels look upon with awe, and cannot dare to gaze upon because of its brilliant splendour, this is what we are nourished with, to this we are united, and we become one body and one flesh with Christ. What shepherd ever fed his sheep with his own blood? But why do I say what shepherd? For even mothers oftentimes give over their children to be nursed by others: but He would not allow this; but feeds us with His own Blood, and unites us thoroughly with Himself."† Thus spake St. Chrysostom, fourteen hundred years ago. And before

\* Witness "La Perpetuité de la Foi de l'Eglise touchant l'Euchariste," in 6 vols.

† Hom 82, in Matt.

him St. Cyril of Jerusalem, whom we have already cited, in his catechetical instructions uses the very words which any Catholic priest would consider the very best adapted for conveying the doctrine of the Church to the minds of the simplest of her children: "Contemplate, therefore, the Bread and Wine not as bare elements, for they are according to our Lord's declaration the Body and Blood of Christ; for though sense suggests this to thee, let Faith establish thee. Judge not the matter from taste, but be fully assured without misgiving, that thou hast been vouchsafed the Body and Blood of Christ. Be fully persuaded that what seems bread is not bread though bread by taste, but the Body of Christ; and that what seems wine is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the Blood of Christ."\* And much earlier than St. Cyril, St. Ignatius the Martyr, successor to the Apostle St. Peter in the Chair of Antioch, denouncing a peculiar sect of Heretics who denied the Mystery of the Incarnation, teaching that the Body assumed by our Blessed Lord was only an apparent one and not real flesh and blood, says that for this very reason, "they abstain from the Eucharist and from the public offices, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins."† How can it be said that the doctrine of the Real Presence is of recent introduction, when hundreds of similar testimonies can be given from the first ages of the Church?

IV. But after all the real difficulties against this Mystery of Love are not from Scripture nor from Tradition, since their testimonies are beyond all doubt, but they proceed from that very same principle which the infidel adopts against faith, and the rationalist

\* Oxford Transl. pp. 271, 272.

† Ign. Ep. ad Smyrn. ii. 16. Archbishop Wake's translation.

against revelation. Such objections will have fuller attention at a later period, when, as I have already promised regarding the sacrament of Penance, I shall devote a few Lectures to the consideration of the more prominent objections which are adduced against Catholic Faith and Practice. If the Protestant says he cannot believe Transubstantiation, because he cannot understand it, why does he not deny the Trinity for the same reason? The Catholic admits the principle of Mystery throughout the doctrines of Faith, and finds not one harder to believe than another. When in a spirit of incredulity an objector says: Unless I see I will not believe, it is not we but some One else who says, *Blessed are they who have not seen, and have believed.\** Admit that Religion concerns the hidden truths of God, and that the supernatural everywhere pervades it, and you will have an established principle upon which you can at once see the possibility and even the reasonableness of such a Mystery as this. But does not the testimony of the senses contradict the doctrine of Transubstantiation, inasmuch as what we see and taste and touch is evidently to the senses bread and wine? I have but just now quoted St. Cyril upon this point; and such a difficulty is at once solved, if you will remember what the Church, as I have reminded you, teaches on the question. All that the senses can pronounce upon are the *accidents* or outward appearances, and these remain unchanged; therefore the senses are not deceived and do not deceive us, because they tell us what is true, that the outward appearance of bread is there. But the senses cannot pronounce upon *substance*, and that may be changed without their knowledge, and consequently without their deception. Does not the Incarnation present an equal difficulty? Could the senses and human expe-

\* John xx. 29

rience of any kind discover the presence of the Divinity in that poor and suffering Child, lying in the manger in the ruined stable of Bethlehem? Or did the senses of the Jews who crucified our Lord discover that same Divinity within Him, when they nailed Him to the Cross, and even appealed to the fact of their not seeing the divinity as their reason for not believing, when they said: *Let Christ the King of Israel come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.\** Faith tells us that the Son of God, equal to the Father in His Divine Nature, humbled Himself and concealed that Nature in the humility of the Incarnation, and that same loving Faith tells us that the same is done in the Blessed Eucharist, where the Humanity is hidden under the sacramental veils.

And if it is again objected, as a difficulty to Faith, that the presence of the Blessed Sacrament is said to exist in very many places at one and the same time, we answer that this was especially intended by our dear Lord who has left Himself in this Mystery for the support and comfort not of one but of all His children, and therefore He wishes to be within the reach of all. So far from being a difficulty, then, this presence in many places is especially implied in the object of our dear Lord's leaving Himself with us. We answer the objection, also, by adducing the miracle of the five loaves which, by our Lord's blessing, fed the crowd of five thousand, each loaf in such an instance multiplying its presence to afford the required relief. I, my dear brethren, in this moment in which I am speaking to you, and trying to nourish you with the word of truth, can make my own thought (would to God I could make my conviction, too!) to be present at one and the same time in the mind of each of you. Give to our dear Lord, who is God, and with whom all

\* Mark xv. 32.

things are possible, a similar power to be present according to the working of His power and His love, and you may find one solution to a difficulty which only comes from too little Faith. Besides, we do not pretend to account naturally for what is mysterious and therefore supernatural; but nature itself will suggest an answer to the unbeliever upon many of the truths which he ventures to call in question.

But there is one solution to all such difficulties which ought at once to suggest itself to the heart of a Christian, and throw light upon all his doubts. *God is Love*; and the nature of Love is to communicate itself. Love is active: it is condescending. In order to gain its end, which is to unite itself with its object, it stands not at humiliation, but it stoops down to embrace and possess what it desires and wishes to make its own. In the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, Love is the link which binds the Blessed Three into One. In the Incarnation Love has united the two natures in the One Person, who through Love came down to redeem man, and to claim him as His own. And we too who are made for God, whose destiny it is to possess Him and to be united with Him, are to realize this holy end by Love. When man loves you know what he can do; and what is there that he does not do when drawn on by the force of Love? When God loves, and loves with an infinite Love, who is to set a limit to His desire to possess and to be united with us, and to say: Thus far shalt Thou go, and no further? *God so loved the world as to give His Only-begotten Son*,\* is the assurance of our dear Lord Himself. This gives to us the motive of the humiliation of our Blessed Redeemer in the Mystery of the Incarnation, and it supplies us with the reason of His continued humiliation in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Once having

\* John iii. 16.

been given, He has not been taken away again, but remains amongst us for ever, and finds His delights to be with the children of men.\* Knowing this love and having experienced its effects and influence, how can we remain cool upon this subject, when the cause which we have to defend is the Love of God? When we defend other Sacraments, and urge their observance upon you, it is for yourselves we speak, that your souls may not lose so great a benefit. But here it is God Himself and His own immediate honour we defend, because from His not being known, He is not loved, but is dishonoured, forgotten, rejected, and despised: and all this because He has humbled Himself for us. May it not be any longer the case, that of any of you it is to be said that *He came to His own, and His own received Him not*, or that *there hath stood in the midst of you, One whom you know not*, or that like Jacob you are to rebuke yourself and say: *Truly is the Lord in this place, and I knew it not!* But rather may it be, that when our dearest Lord shall in a moment be exposed for the adoration of all of us, we may unite in offering to Him that threefold tribute which He always values: Faith, whose province it is to recognise the Real Presence and substance of that which appears not: Hope, which will find support and strength in that Bread of which he that eateth shall live for ever; and Love, because all that we know of God is that He is the God of Love, and all that God wishes to know of us is that Love should be upon our part the fulfilment of the Law.

• Prov. viii. 31.





LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXXIII.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

No. 2.

*Sacrifice of the Mass—Communion under one kind.*

## LECTURE XXXIII.

### THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

(No. 2.)

*Sacrifice of the Mass.—Communion under one kind.*

I have left but half-finished the holy subject upon which I engaged your attention last Sunday, the Mystery of the Adorable Eucharist. I wish to complete the subject this evening, at least as far as a very imperfect sketch and explanation of Catholic Doctrine and Practice upon this Sacrament is concerned. It is a subject, as I have admitted and you have perceived, upon which it is not easy to speak with the same cool deliberation, as upon many other questions which are at issue between us, and those who unfortunately deny what we believe and know to have been revealed by God. It is hard for us, then, to enter into the feelings of a Protestant, when he without any love denies what we not only believe so firmly, but value so deeply, and love so warmly.

For the sake of unity and connectedness let me remind you of what I have already said. The great point that I insisted upon in the last Lecture, was the fact of the Real Presence, that is to say, that the Body and Blood of our Lord are truly present under the form or appearances of bread and wine. This truth is declared to us in three distinct classes of texts from the Sacred Scripture, which state it as clearly as language can possibly state any fact; so that it is only by leaving Scripture and perverting its meaning, that any

arguments can be adduced against the Catholic doctrine. The voice of antiquity faithfully echoes the voice of inspiration, and assures how in every age of the Church, what we teach and defend has been taught and defended by the most learned and holy Saints and Doctors. Whatever difficulties human reason may allege against this mystery, they are no greater than those which the same reason adduces against the Blessed Trinity or the Incarnation, and they present no obstacle whatever to Faith. One solution to all such difficulties is found in the consideration of what love can do, especially an infinite Love as is that of God, a Love which in all its relations to man has shown its tendency towards humility and union. It was not a greater step from Calvary to the Eucharist, than it was from Heaven to Calvary; and that same force of charity which could humble the Divinity before which the very angels tremble, so as to clothe it in the form of an outcast, could clothe the same humanity under the form of Bread, in order that it might become the food and support of man. I have still two important questions to bring before you in connexion with this holy Sacrament: the discipline of giving Communion to the laity under one kind only, and the teaching of the Church upon the Sacrifice of the Mass. The former is a matter of Practice, the latter of Doctrine. We will try to give to both of them such attention as will enable us to accept and to understand what the Church proposes.

1. With regard to the discipline of the Church in ordering Holy Communion to be given to the laity under one kind only, let the doctrine of the Church be understood upon the Real Presence, and we can then see the motive which suggests such a discipline. As we believe that under the form of Bread, there is present the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord, we receive the full reality under this one form.

Therefore nothing whatever is withheld from the plenitude of the Sacrament, since under the form of Bread alone "Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament," as the Creed of Pope Pius IV. so truly declares. For by the words of consecration, remember that the Bread is changed into the *living* Body of our Lord, and therefore into His Body which contains within It His Precious Blood. Let those, who would censure the Church for her discipline upon this point, bear in mind, then, what the Church teaches, and they must admit that the laity are deprived of nothing when all is given to them. But if they themselves deny the Real Presence, do they under both forms give any reality, if there be no reality present? It is not the Catholic Church then which deprives her children of any blessing in Holy Communion, since each of them can at such a time exclaim with truth, *Hath He not with Himself given us all things?\** But they on the contrary do take everything away, who leave their children in anguish, crying out like Magdalene in her desolation: *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have placed Him.†*

So far from violating any supposed command in Scripture, we maintain that we have even Scripture sanction for this practice of the Church. It is objected to us that in the words of the promise of the Blessed Eucharist, in John vi., our dear Lord says that *except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you*; and that at the time of the fulfilment of the promise, on the night of the Institution, our Lord gave communion under both kinds, and commanded that what He had done should be done by His Apostles in commemoration of Him. With regard to the first of these two objections, we would observe that those who adduce those words

\* Rom. viii. 32.

† John xx. 3.

against us, do for the most part insist that in these words of promise, our Lord is not speaking of the real receiving His Body and Blood, but only figuratively of Faith: why then do they afterwards turn round and apply the words to Communion? But if they are urged against us, because upon our own admission they do refer to the receiving Him in Communion, in answer we repeat what we have already declared to be the teaching of the Church, that under the form of Bread we both eat His Flesh and drink His Blood, inasmuch as both are really and truly present under that one kind. It is very worthy of notice that in John vi. there is no mention whatever of wine. The presence of the Flesh and Blood are affirmed, but the form of Bread only is alluded to; and when it is declared that unless both the Flesh and Blood be received, we shall not have life, it is clearly implied and stated that both are under the form of Bread, inasmuch as our Lord says of this one form only: *If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever*: and again: *He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me*; and also: *He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever*.\* And at the time of the Institution, when our dear Lord administered under both kinds, and ordered His Apostles to do what He had done in commemoration of Him, remember that only the Apostles were present; and the order then given was limited to them, unless the laity would claim that they are also ministers of this Sacrament, and are to exercise the office of the Priesthood which upon that occasion was, as to one of its functions, bestowed upon the Apostles. When Priests offer the Sacrifice of the Mass they do receive under both kinds, and thus obey our Lord's command.† When our Lord after His

\* John vi. 52, 58, 59.

† The argument of Barclay the Quaker Apologist is unanswerable to Protestants, when he urges against them, that if our Lord on

Resurrection communicated the two disciples going to Emmaus, He administered under the form of Bread only; and that it was really Holy Communion He gave to them we conclude from the words of the Evangelist, so similar to those recording the Institution: *Whilst He was at table with them, He took Bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to them.\** Here there is not a word of His giving them the Cup. And again in Acts ii. it is said of the early converts: *they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of Bread, and of prayer.†* No mention again of the wine. And also in Acts xx. St. Luke says: *On the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread,‡* without saying anything of the wine. From these instances we see how the Church is justified in her discipline of administering Holy Communion to the laity under one kind only. Both kinds, bread and wine, are required, as we shall see presently, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, in order to represent the shedding of the Blood in the Sacrifice upon Calvary, and therefore both are offered, and consecrated, and received by the Priest in every Mass. But the whole essence of the Sacrament being present under either form, nothing, as we have already stated, is kept back from the laity when all is given under one kind.

Observe, too, my dear Brethren, that this is a matter of discipline over which the Church has that full authority which has been committed to her. And beyond any doubt the Church has shown that her

this occasion commanded all to receive His Body and Blood, He also made the Priesthood common to all. We are also perfectly justified in urging in our favour against Protestants the fact that St. Luke, who is the only Evangelist who gives the words, *Do this in commemoration of Me*, places them after the Communion of the Apostles under the form of Bread only.

\* Luke xxiv 30.

† Acts ii. 42.

‡ Acts xx. 7.

discipline is an outward declaration of her faith that whether under either kind alone, or under both kinds, Christ is received whole and entire. Sometimes Communion has been given under both kinds, and that was ordinarily the case in earlier ages, though by no means universally so. To the sick it was usual to administer the Blessed Sacrament under one form only, as we know from very many instances, amongst which may be named the death-bed of St. Ambrose, who, though a Bishop, received Holy Communion immediately before his death from the hands of St. Honoratus under the form of Bread only. To infants it used to be sometimes administered under the form of Wine only. In times of persecution the Blessed Sacrament was reserved by the faithful for their Communion under the form of Bread only, and under that same form it was received by the holy Anchorites in the desert. From such instances we see that the Church has regulated her discipline of giving Holy Communion according to circumstances; but whatever has been her discipline, her faith has been always the same, that whether under either kind or under both, the same great reality is received, Christ Himself, a true and complete Sacrament. When, therefore, the number of Communicants increased in the Church, the grievous inconvenience and the danger of profanation that would result in administering to all under the form of Wine, supplied a sufficient reason to order Communion to be given under the form of Bread only. But still, if the Church even now saw sufficient reason for allowing or ordering the administering under both kinds, she has the power to do what her wisdom would direct. Indeed, the very same Pope Pius IV., who in his Creed declares that under either kind the Sacrament is complete, did give permission for both kinds to be administered in some dioceses of Germany, being influenced by reasons of prudence. And in an early age, we find Pope Leo the



Great even commanding the reception under both kinds to some who were suspected of Manichæism, and who heretically forbade the use of wine even in the Sacrifice of the Mass. Thus the Church has always maintained her liberty of discipline, at the same time that she has never pretended to interfere with the substance of the Sacrament.

II. I must now proceed to bring before you what the Church teaches upon the Blessed Eucharist, as being something more than a Sacrament, inasmuch as it is also the Sacrifice of the New Law. The Creed of Pope Pius IV. thus defines our faith upon this question. "I profess, likewise, that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead." Before stating and proving the doctrine of the Church upon the Sacrifice of the Mass let me premise this observation. If it is the case that Almighty God has always attached a great importance to Sacrifice, and has established it as the Supreme act of religious worship, how awful a robbery of His Glory must it be upon the part of those who mutilate Religion to such a degree, as to deprive it of its very soul and essence in destroying its Sacrifice! If God always hated rapine in a holocaust, how will He view those who deny Him any portion of the holocaust, and pretend that they worship Him in truth and spirit, when they refuse Him that act of homage which Sacrifice alone can adequately express! When, then, you understand what the Church teaches and practises with regard to the Sacrifice of the Mass, you will all rejoice to join with her in offering to God this tribute of infinite value, and in the spirit of thankfulness you will exclaim : *What return shall I make to the Lord for all that He has given to me : I will take the cup of Salvation, and will call upon the Name of the Lord.\**

1. What the Church teaches on the Holy Sacrifice of

\* Ps. cxv.

the Mass is thus declared in the Council of Trent, from the argument of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews.\* By the establishment of the New Law the Sacrifices of the Old Law have been set aside, for they were but figures of what was to come. *Another Priest* has now arisen *according to the order of Melchisedech.*† This Priest was to offer Himself once upon the Cross, that by means of His Death and the shedding of His Blood He was to purchase for us eternal redemption. But as He was to be a Priest *for ever*, He would perpetuate this Sacrifice, and have it constantly offered in His Church in an unbloody manner, inasmuch as He was also to be a Priest according to the Order of Melchisedech, who offered to God the clean and bloodless oblation of Bread and Wine. Therefore the night before He suffered, when for the last time He was in the presence of His Apostles, He took the Bread and Wine, as Melchisedech did, declared that they were the forms under which were truly present His Body which was given for them, and His Blood which was to be shed for them unto the remission of sins. And He transmitted His Priesthood to His Apostles, and as He had once identified them with Himself, when He declared, *He that heareth you heareth Me.* so does He identify Himself with them again when He says: *Do this in Commemoration of Me.* So that when by virtue of that order, the Apostles exercised the priestly function, and offered the Bread and Wine and consecrated it into His Body and Blood, they offered not a distinct but the same Sacrifice, which was offered mystically on that night, and visibly in a bloody manner on the next day upon Calvary. So that the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Cross are one and the same: the Mass being instituted as a memorial and a perpetuation of the Sacrifice of the Cross. They are

the same, because the Victim is the same, namely the Body and Blood of Christ; and the Priest is the same, namely Christ Himself, who, by the hands of an ordained minister, a successor of the Apostles, offers again to His Father after the manner of Melchisedech, what He had once offered in His Death and the visible shedding of His Blood upon the Cross. Such, then is the Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. And that there is in the New Law such a Sacrifice is declared to us in the prophecies of the Old Law. There is the noted declaration to which St. Paul alludes, as we have already observed, that Christ was to be *a Priest for ever according to the Order of Melchisedech* ;\* this Melchisedech, as we read in Gen. xiv. having chosen bread and wine as the matter of his Sacrifice, when he came forth so mysteriously to bless Abram on his journey to the promised land. And of this very same Sacrifice does the last of the Prophets, Malachy, speak when foretelling the rejection of the Jewish Sacrifices, which has been accomplished to the evidence of the universe, he announced that another was to be substituted. Hear the words which Almighty God utters through His prophet. After censuring the priests of the Old Law for their unfaithfulness, He says : *I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will not receive a gift at your hands. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is Sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation : for My Name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.*† Where else but in the Catholic Church and in the Sacrifice of the Mass are these prophecies fulfilled? In the Christian law, the Gentiles are the chosen people, and the Commission has been given to preach the Gospel to them, and to bring them

into the Church. *All Nations* are the inheritance of Christ, and amongst them His Name is great and is held in benediction. The Jews have been rejected: their temple exists not: their Sacrifices are at an end. And early every morning, as the sun rises and makes its daily journey till it sets in the west, it witnesses in the various kingdoms and countries of the globe the ministers of the Christian priesthood one after the other standing like Melchisedech with the clean oblation of Bread and Wine, consecrating and offering it to God as the continuation and memorial of the Great Sacrifice by which our Redemption has been accomplished. Observe the exact fulfilment. It is not in *one* place, as was the case with the Jews, but in *all* places: not by Jews, but by the heirs of the *Gentiles*: not a Sacrifice of goats and oxen, but a *clean* oblation. And *from the rising to the setting of the sun*; so that now at this very moment, though the sun has long since set to us, the same Sacrifice which we offered to-day and at which you assisted, is, in the countries in which the sun is now rising or has but lately risen, being offered by the Priesthood of the Church, which, being Catholic, is the Church of all nations. And when the sun to these countries will have declined in its course, it will in its rising again to us to-morrow, witness once more upon all the Altars of this country the same Sacrifice of thanksgiving and propitiation.

3. Nor is it not from the Prophecies only, but from the declarations of the New Testament that we have assurances of the Mass being the Sacrifice of the New Law. When our dearest Lord, on the night of the Last Supper, instituted the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist, He declared that He was then establishing the New Covenant, and was substituting a New Sacrifice in place of the old. His solemn words, *This is My Blood of the New Testament*,\* bear a clear reference

\* Matt. xxvi. 28.

to the words used by Moses, when establishing by Sacrifice the Old Covenant, he said: *This is the Blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined unto you;* and this is quoted by St. Paul.\* And the order which was given to the Apostles to offer this Sacrifice was acted upon by them, as we read in their Acts when it is said: *As they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said to them,† &c.* What does ministering to the Lord mean? The word in the original Greek‡ means *sacrificing*, or performing a liturgical act. And St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. exhorting the faithful to keep away from the sacrifices of the Gentiles, and not to partake of the offerings which were there made, says, *The things which the heathens sacrifice they sacrifice to devils and not to God; and I would not that you should be made partakers with devils. You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils. You cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord, and the table of devils.§* Here the Apostle draws a parallel between the Christian Sacrifice and the heathen, which he elsewhere applies to the Jewish Sacrifice when he says: *We have an Altar of which they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle.||* Here we have a sufficiently clear intimation of a recognized Sacrifice and Altar. Look, my dear brethren, at our Altar, and you can see from its very appearance and the care with which we always love to decorate it, that it is used for a holy purpose, and that we too have an Altar on which Sacrifice is offered, and from which those alone are permitted to partake, who have inherited the faith and observe the practice of the Apostles. When, then, you bear in mind that the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Cross are one and the same, as to the Victim which is offered and the Priest who offers, differing only in the manner of offering, because that of

\* Heb. ix. 20.

† Acts xiii. 2.

‡ Λειτουργούντες.

§ 1 Cor. x. 20.

¶ Heb. xiii. 10.

the Cross was in a bloody manner, and that of the Mass is according to the order of Melchisedech, you can understand what St. Paul means in that same Epistle to the Hebrews in which he declares the Priesthood of Christ, when he says that *Christ was offered once* ;\* for the Mass is not a distinct Sacrifice, but is a continual oblation of the same Victim, which has purchased our Redemption.

4. Let me say one word as to the acknowledgment of the Sacrifice of the Mass in the very early ages of the Church. St. Justin the Martyr, in the second century, arguing against the Jews, points to the fact that the prophecy of Malachy had been accomplished: "For it was of the Sacrifices of us, the Gentiles, that is to say, of the Bread of the Eucharist and the Cup also of the Eucharist, that Malachy spoke, foretelling that we were to glorify His Name, and that you were profaning it."† And at the same time, St. Irenæus, (who, I have often reminded you, was a disciple of St. Polycarp the disciple of St. John the Evangelist) says: "God had most clearly declared by Malachy, that His former people would cease to offer Sacrifice, but that in every place there should be offered to Him a Sacrifice, and a clean one. Christ fulfilling this prophecy instituted the new Sacrifice of the New Testament, which the Church, receiving it from the Apostles, offers to God throughout the whole world.‡ Only one more testimony need I cite, but it is a very important one. It is the voice not of one Father, but the declaration and decree of the Episcopate united in the first General Council at Nicæa, A.D. 325. Speaking upon the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, this Council thus affirms both the Sacrifice

\* Heb. ix. 25.

† Just. Dial. cum Tryph. Num. 41.

‡ Iren adv. Hær. L. iv. 17.



of the Mass and the Real Presence. "In this divine table let us not in a low manner fix our thoughts upon the Bread and the Cup which are placed before us; but raising up our minds, let us believe by faith that upon that sacred table is laid that Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, offered up by the priests in an unbloody manner, and that we truly receive His Precious Body and Blood."\* Thus does the voice of antiquity express the Faith of to-day, that the Sacrifice of the Mass is truly propitiatory, inasmuch as it is the same as that of the Cross, and that it obtains mercy for us in a seasonable time.

III. And now, my dear brethren, in concluding what we have to say upon the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, the holiest and greatest of the Sacraments, may I not express again our astonishment, that we should have to defend, even against those who profess to be followers of Christ, this great Sacrament which He has instituted, and the Sacrifice which He has left perpetually with His Church? What a reality have we not here, of which in the olden dispensation they had but a figure in those Sacrifices which God so much valued then, but which He has now so utterly rejected. The great Sacrifice of Calvary stands midway between the two dispensations, the conclusion of one, the commencement of the other; but yet for its greatness and its all-sufficiency not lost sight of either in the one or the other, inasmuch as the old Sacrifices pointed forwards to it as their fulfilment and their crown, and the Sacrifice of the New Law looks upon it as ever continuing, and offering to God the Great Price of our Redemption. Jerusalem is abandoned, and its sacrifices have ceased; the enemies of the Church too, by a kind of visible judgment of God upon them, do not aspire to so noble a tribute of homage to God: but



everywhere in the Church are fulfilled the prophetic words of our dear Lord: *Believe me, the time cometh when you shall neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father.....but the hour cometh when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth.\** This time has dawned upon us, and however great may be our interest in looking back into the times of old, when the faithful children of God assembled together with grateful and obedient hearts to testify their love and fidelity, in that sacrificial system which God Himself has established, we are far more than amply repaid when we look upon the reality we ourselves possess in the Sacrifice, which from the rising to the setting of the sun is everywhere now offered to Him whose name is great among the Gentiles.

In Religion the heart yearns for Sacrifice, as answering our aspirations and expressing most fully all that we could wish to offer, as all that we owe to God. We are creatures of God, and stand forth as the representative of the rest of Creation, to do by our free act what all Creation bids us to do, to express our dependence upon God and to acknowledge Him as the great Lord of the Universe. Sacrifice expresses our thought and fulfils our wish, and daily do we long and rejoice to offer this Sacrifice of Praise. But as we have sinned, we supplicate for pardon, and we could wish to offer to God an adequate Sacrifice of Atonement to propitiate Him to mercy, and to secure our pardon. And in our feeling of gratitude for all the favours bestowed upon ourselves and upon all creatures, by the beneficent Hand which has called us into being, and which is ever preserving us, we cry out: *What shall I return to God for all that He has bestowed upon me?* And we answer our own call by the resolution which our gratitude suggests: *I will take the chalice of salvation, and*

\* John iv. 21

*will call upon the name of the Lord.* Looking to the future, too, which is before us, and knowing our weakness and our wants, we call for aid in a seasonable time, and long to have a pledge to offer as a security for present grace and future glory. All is provided for us in the Sacrifice of the Mass, which is thus offered for the fourfold ends of all Sacrifice; an acknowledgment of dependence, a propitiation for sin, a thanksgiving for blessings, and an assurance of the bestowal of graces and blessings. Happy, but too happy are we, who in assisting at the daily sacrifice, can thus offer to God all that He values, and all that we can desire! What the favoured Evangelist witnessed in his vision, we can witness every day by Faith, the Lamb lying on the Altar as it were slain,\* the silence of half-an-hour,† and the Angels and Saints standing around and offering their prayers and adoration. Here we have an abridgment and a memorial of all the wonderful works of God: here we have the perpetual existence of the Incarnation, and the mystical shedding of the Precious Blood shown in the separate consecration of the elements; here we have the satisfaction of all our desires now, and the pledge of our glory hereafter. “O Sacred Banquet,” do we exclaim, in the fervent accents of the Church, “in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is renewed, the soul is filled with Grace, and there is given unto us a pledge of future Glory.”

\* Rev. v. 6.

† Rev. viii. 3.

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXXIV.

THE SACRAMENTS—(CONTINUED.)

*Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and  
Matrimony.*



## LECTURE XXXIV.

### THE SACRAMENTS—(CONTINUED.)

#### *Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony.*

Having explained to you the doctrine of the Church respecting three of the Sacraments, namely Baptism, Penance, and the Holy Eucharist, there remains not very much in the beautiful Sacramental System, which can demand any effort in enforcing the necessity of accepting the Doctrine and Practice of the Catholic Church regarding these inventions of God's love for His people. For when we have succeeded in defending and impressing the truth of the Church's teaching upon the Sacraments of Penance and of the Blessed Eucharist, we can expect a ready admission, upon the part of any who might have objected to those two important Sacraments, in regard to the others which the perfection of the working of the Church for the spiritual welfare of the faithful requires and always has required. But though there does not remain much of a controversial character to be said upon the four remaining Sacraments, namely Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony, yet their nature must be explained, and their existence and reality as Sacraments of the New Law must be defended. Having been instituted by Jesus Christ for the benefit of His children, they have been universally and perpetually maintained and administered in the Catholic Church, the ever-faithful depository of the mysteries of God; but have been robbed by the cruel and devastating hand of error from those who have unfortunately been its

victims. Upon each of these four, it will be my endeavour, as it is my duty, just to say enough to explain its Sacramental character, and to point out how all of them are demanded for the perfecting of the ministry of the Church in saving souls and forming Saints. And I trust and pray, that what I shall say in concluding this most noble and beautiful and practical subject of the Sacraments, on which we are now engaged for the fifth time, may have the effect of removing prejudices, of creating admiration and love for the Church, and of inviting into their true home those who may not hitherto have known what good things God has here prepared for those who love Him.

We will commence with the Sacraments of Confirmation and Extreme Unction, which are Sacraments intended for the benefit of all; and afterwards attend to Holy Orders and Matrimony, each of which is specially destined for that state of life to which God in His directing Providence calls an individual soul.

I. Confirmation is that Sacrament by which the Holy Ghost with His gifts and graces is given to the soul, in order that he that receives it may have the special strength, necessary to enable him to profess courageously that faith which was infused at Baptism. Hence its name, Confirmation, expresses the Sacramental Grace which it bestows. And as by Baptism we are admitted as members of the Church, and are born as her children, by Confirmation we are admitted more directly into the army of the Church militant, and become the soldiers of Jesus Christ. As every Sacrament must have the three requisites of an outward sign, an inward grace, and the institution of Jesus Christ, these are not wanting in Confirmation. The outward sign, which also here as elsewhere constitutes the *matter* and *form* of the Sacrament, consists in the action performed and the words used in its administra-

tion. The Bishop, who from the Apostolical times, has been acknowledged as the ordinary minister of this Sacrament, imposes his hands on the person to be confirmed, and anoints him with chrism, the oil specially prepared and blessed for Sacramental use, and by this sign represents that he is in the Name of God bestowing a solemn gift, and strengthening the soul and making it more active and vigorous in its spiritual conflict. The inward Grace which is represented by this Sign, is the increase of sanctifying Grace, and the infusion of strength into the soul, to enable it, as the same gift enabled the Apostles when bestowed upon them on the great day of Pentecost, to profess the faith courageously in spite of all the opposition and persecution of the world. Such a gift is indeed most to be desired; for there is always to be found a spirit of opposition to the doctrines of the Gospel, which the faithful followers of Christ have ever to be facing. When therefore a person has arrived at that age, in which the maxims of the world, as opposed to those of the Gospel, are likely to form an impression on the soul, and may make it swerve from its loyalty, this Sacrament is provided for him in order to shelter and to secure his allegiance.

That this Sacrament was instituted by our dear Lord follows from Scripture declarations which are clear enough, especially when brought home to us by the authoritative voice of the Church. Our dear Saviour repeatedly promised His Apostles that He would after His Ascension send down upon them the Holy Spirit, for the special purpose of enlightening, comforting and strengthening them. He fulfilled His word on the day of Pentecost, and in a visible manner infused into them the invisible gifts which accompanied this solemn fulfilment of His promise. And what the Apostles received they communicated ministerially and Sacramentally to others, as we read in the history of their



labours. For in Acts viii. we read of the conversion of Samaria by Philip the Deacon who baptized the converts whom he made in that country. But as Philip was not an Apostle, and had not the power of administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, this is what occurred. Peter and John came to them, prayed, *imposed hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.\** The same was done by St. Paul, as we read in Acts xix. 6. Nor is there wanting an authority which alludes to the administering of this Sacrament by the means of anointing as well as by the imposing of hands; for thus says St. Paul encouraging the Corinthians by reminding them of what they had received: *He that Confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us is God, Who also hath sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.†* And St. John exhorting his children to perseverance in spite of those who would seduce them, says: *Let the Unction which you have received from Him, abide in you.‡* Authorities can be cited in every age of the Church to show that this Sacrament was administered to Neophytes after their Baptism. I will quote only one as a sample. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in those Catechetical Instructions which I have elsewhere had occasion to cite, devotes a whole instruction to this Sacrament, and amongst other things says to his Catechumens: “After you have come up from the pool of the sacred streams, was given to you the Unction, the emblem of that wherewith Christ was anointed: and this is the Holy Ghost;” and also: “While thy body is anointed with visible ointment, thy soul is sanctified by the Holy and life-giving Spirit.”§ Thus, then, we have for this Sacrament all that is required in order to establish its character. We have the sign, the inward Grace, the institution of Christ.

\* Acts. viii. 14. &c.

† 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

‡ 1 John. ii. 27.

§ Cyr. Catech. xxi. Oxford Transl. pp. 267. 268.

We have its use in Scripture, its acknowledged existence from the earliest ages of the Church, its continued practice down to our own days. In a word we have in it a provision made by God for the wants of His children, a special Grace given to answer a special need.

II. Let us pass on to the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, or the last anointing. If we are eager in our defence of the Sacrament of Confirmation, because it answers a purpose so important and bestows so great a Gift upon us, the circumstance of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction may well justify some additional zeal in its defence ; for in this there is a question not of the living, so much as of the dying Christian. How cruel and dire must be the effects of Heresy, which spares not even the reality of the death-bed, but would rob it of the special help and comfort, which the loving Heart of our dearest Lord had prepared for such a time ! For the object of this Sacrament is to assist and give special strength in the time of sickness and at the hour of death, in order that at that time the soul may be able to conquer in the spiritual struggle which then occurs. Well does the Church know how much depends upon the hour of death, and that the very eternal state of the soul depends upon the issue of that moment : and gladly therefore does she come, provided by Almighty God with means to help that same soul which she had received as her child at Baptism, and had attended by Ministerial and Sacramental aid all through life. If it is one of the sins that cries to Heaven for vengeance to deprive the labourer of his wages, the denial of Extreme Unction is such a sin ; for after the labours of life, it is one of the rewards of a faithful servant to be attended in death by the Ministry of the Church, and to be comforted and strengthened in that time of greatest and most anxious need.

This Sacrament too has the three requisites of an outward sign, an inward Grace, and the institution of Christ. The outward sign is like that of Confirmation, the anointing with oil: the inward Grace is the strength and help, and increase of Grace which is at that time bestowed upon the soul. And the institution of Christ is clearly shown from the fact of its being solemnly ordered by the Apostle St. James, and even from the fact of the anointing of the sick being practised by the Apostles during the very lifetime of our Blessed Lord. This is recorded for us in these words of St. Mark: *Going forth they preached that men should do penance: and they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.\** We do not insist that this was actually a Sacramental anointing; but it states the fact, that the Apostles when learning under our Lord how to be missionaries, were taught to use oil in their administrations to the sick. It is therefore an indication of what is meant, when St. James so decidedly orders an anointing of the sick by the priesthood of the Church. Hear his words: *Is any one sick amongst you? let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.†* If St. James thus teaches what ought to be done, remember he was an Apostle, and therefore was only teaching what our Lord had taught him; for the commission given to all the Apostles, to which they were so faithful was: *Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.‡* How good is God in His dealings with His children in preparing such help for them at such a time! For remember, my dear Brethren, a great truth, the great truth we may call

\* Mark vi. 12, 13.

† James v. 14, 15.

‡ Matt. xxviii. 20.

it, which it concerns us all so much to know and to appreciate. This life is but the passage to eternity, and the most momentous time of life is the time in which that passage is made, that is to say the time of death. And if the Sacraments are to prepare us for eternity, might we not expect that there should be one particularly destined for such a time? We might indeed expect it; and our expectations are realized, and even anticipated by the inventive love of our dearest Saviour, who leaves with His Church the duty and the power of thus fortifying the sick, and giving them that Sacrament which thus perfects at the end of life, a system which finds Baptism and Confirmation towards its commencement, Penance and the Blessed Eucharist in its progress, and Extreme Unction at its conclusion.

III. There remain still two Sacraments, each of them the initiation and the preparation for one of those states, which the spiritual and the social state of the Church demands for its children. Holy Orders is the Sacrament which gives grace to one state, Matrimony to the other. There is a fitness in both of them, and an antecedent probability of their existence. We will examine, and we shall find that here too, all that we could wish and expect has been furnished by the generosity of Our Lord in His dealing with His Church.

1. We might at once be prepared to admit Holy Orders as a Sacrament, when we see in the Gospel history, the manner in which our Blessed Lord dealt with His Apostles. Certainly He did bestow upon them a power and a spiritual jurisdiction which was not common with all those who followed Him. He chose twelve, gave them a solemn commission, made them the foundation of His Church, and even by visible signs and ceremonies invested them with their gifts and stamped upon them their ministerial character. Even before this, the Priestly and Prophetical office of the Old Law prepares us to expect some equivalent and

greater reality in the New Law; and as the Office of the Priesthood was then bestowed by a rite which established it as one of the Sacraments of the Old Law, we may well expect to find a fulfilment of this type and shadow of good things to come, in the better and fuller dispensation of the New. Indeed practically the Priesthood is admitted as a Sacrament even by those who deny it to be one of the Sacraments of the Gospel; for the ministerial office and authority which are exercised by their Clergy is a virtual acknowledgment of such a reality. The three requisites are easily to be recognized in this Sacrament. The outward sign consists in the Acts performed in the Ordination Service, such as the imposition of hands, the anointing, and the delivery of the instruments of office to those who are accepting its duties and privileges. The inward Grace is the authority and help which is at that time communicated by the act performed, of which St. Paul speaks so precisely when to his disciple St. Timothy he says: *Do not neglect the Grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood;\** and again: *I admonish thee that thou stir up the Grace that is in thee by the imposition of my hands.†*

These words of the Apostle also show its institution by Christ, for if Ordination was thus administered by the Apostles, it was by virtue of the commission given to them. Indeed when our dear Saviour invested the Apostles with their priestly functions, He acted in accordance with the principle of a ritual ordination. By an outward act, He bestowed upon them an inward power. He did this when He breathed upon them, and made them ministers of the Sacrament of Penance, saying: *Whatsoever sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them,‡* infusing into them at that moment the

\* 1 Tim. iv. 14.

† 2 Tim. i. 6.

‡ John xx. 23.

spirit which by an outward sign He represented. And also at the last Supper in an outward manner He made them the ministers of the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist, when He authorized them to do what He was then doing, in commemoration of Him. We find the actual ordination of St. Paul and Barnabas recorded and performed by an outward act: *And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them: then they fasting and praying and imposing their hands upon them sent them away.\** And when the seven deacons were presented for their Ordination, in like manner they were invested by the outward act of imposition of hands.† The Catholic Church, then, by a similar outward act, and by the anointing with holy oil, transmits to her ministers the power and character first established in the Priesthood by our Blessed Lord, and faithfully preserved by an unbroken succession ever since. How noble and holy is the work entrusted to such a Priesthood, of preaching the word of God, remitting sins in His Name, consecrating the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and showing, especially by virtue of its celibate state, that he who bears it is appointed by God to give up all the cares of a private family, in order to be able to minister more freely in the midst of the poor, who form the friends and the more privileged family of Christ!

2. Such is the priesthood, and such the Sacrament of Holy Orders; but there is one more Sacrament still to complete this sevenfold dispensation of God's goodness in the Ministry of the Church. In the same manner as in Paradise, God united our two first parents into a holy union, blessed them and bade them to *increase and*

\* Acts xiii. 2, 3.

† Acts vi. 6.



*multiply*, so does the Church by a special Sacrament sanctify the union established by those who are drawn to form with each other that social contract, from which result all the duties of the Family. It is a new kind of existence, as it opens a new sphere of labour, and a new source of responsibility, and therefore it is fitting that there should be reserved for it the particular blessing and help which is demanded. The Sacrament of Matrimony answers this end; and in the holy view which the Church takes of the contract which is hereby established, she teaches that it is not only a natural and social union, but that it is raised to the dignity of a Sacrament.

Matrimony has the three requisites of a Sacrament. The outward sign is that act by which the contracting parties visibly give each to the other the assurance of an inward consent to the union formed between them. The inward Grace and blessing is, as the Council of Trent expresses it, "the Grace which perfects that natural love, and confirms that indissoluble union;" so that what nature inspires and suggests is made supernatural by the application of the Merits of our dear Lord. The institution of Christ is found in those words in which, after citing the words inspired by God to Adam, in which our first parent declares that married persons become *two in one flesh*, He defines that the union is really the work of God and indissoluble, saying: *What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.\** If then when two persons contract the marriage obligation, it is God Himself who by His action cements the union, this is quite the nature of a Sacramental operation. And St. Paul, in announcing the mutual duties of married persons, urges the supernatural and holy nature of the union and contract which have been formed between them. *Husbands, love your wives,*

\* Matt. xix. 6.



*as Christ also loved the Church.....so also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself; For no man ever hated his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church; because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh: this is a great Sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church.\** The word which in the version sanctioned by the Catholic Church is translated *Sacrament*, is in the Protestant version translated *Mystery*. But the original Greek word means Sacrament as well as Mystery, and is the word by which in that language they express our word Sacrament. And when the Apostle likens the union formed in marriage, to that close and sacred and inseparable union, which subsists between Christ and the Church, he expresses the very character which the Catholic Church gives of this Sacrament, when she declares it indissoluble by any power of man. But I think that it is unnecessary to dwell longer on a point which practically is not much debated between us and those separated from us, at least as to the holiness of this bond of union, *Marriage being honourable in all*,† as St. Paul says. Certainly it would have been far more in union with the clear declaration of our dear Lord and of the Apostle, and consequently more to the advantage of society itself, if this indissolubility had been faithfully acknowledged, instead of having been authoritatively contradicted by the legal enactments of this country!

IV. Let me now, having completed the view of the Sacraments so beautifully presented to us by the Catholic Church, refer you back again to a thought and a truth which I laid before you when introducing before you the Sacramental System. St. Paul speaks of the

\* Eph. v. 25...32.

† Heb. xiii. 4.

working of the Ministry in the Church being destined towards perfecting Saints and building up the body of Christ.\* How truly and effectually is this being constantly done in the administration of the Sacraments! Just as the life of the body is in its blood,† which circulates throughout the system, and imparts power, motion, activity and beauty to every limb, so is the life of the Church manifested in that action which by the Sacramental System imparts the Precious Blood of our Lord to aid in every stage and circumstance of life. When the natural life begins, Baptism first infuses into us the life-giving stream of Grace, and we are born to the Supernatural state. When the life of education and the preparing for greater struggles and the harder realities of social life is in its course, Confirmation gives a fresh vigour and impulse to the circulation which was first set in action at Baptism. If this action becomes languid and its force impeded by sin which is so opposed to Grace, the Sacrament of Penance removes the evil, and repairs what had been at fault. And the constant supply of this force is kept up in spite of the wear and tear of the system, by that Food of the Soul, the Bread of Life, the Eucharistic Banquet, of which he that eateth hath life in him, and is thus strengthened and refreshed constantly in his pilgrimage on earth. And when that end approaches, which though a temporal death, is but the passage to the real and future life, provision is made for that important step, by which we pass from time to eternity. And as we are destined to live not for ourselves only, but for others also, and must in our social capacity do our share in the great realities of life, we are fitted for this mutual intercourse by a grace which is given not for ourselves merely, but to be used in our influence upon others. Thus we may say of the Sacramental System what our dear Saviour,

\* E. h. iv. 12.

† Lev. xvii. 11.

its inaugurator has said, *I have come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly.\**

Just as in Paradise there was the Tree of Life, which was destined to communicate immortality to those that would partake of its fruit, there is the same Tree planted in the Church, and at each exigency we can gather and derive benefit in the hour of need; for each phase of life is thus provided with what it requires. And we can stretch forth our hand and eat of this fruit, for the curse of the fall has been revoked, and in the Church we find Paradise open to us once more. And as in the fall, the body brought such ruin to the soul, as to strip it of its brightest beauty, restitution is made in the system blessed by our Incarnate Lord, and through the body Grace passes to the soul. For in the Mystery of the Incarnation, God took upon Himself an outward form, and became the means by which outward acts could produce an inward spiritual effect. For it is to this Mystery and to the Merits of the Sacred Humanity, that all the Sacraments, as we unceasingly teach and insist, owe their influence and their wondrous efficacy. Eminently practical, then, as is this Sacramental System, it deserves and it claims to be accepted and acknowledged, as being so intimately connected with the attainment of salvation. It presents not a mere question of doctrine or theory; it is a great reality, and it concerns all to admit it. Therefore it is that we urge it upon all, as they value their souls, to value the Sacraments also, upon which the life of those souls so closely depends.

When we say that the Sacraments owe their efficacy to the Precious Blood of our dearest Redeemer, the mention of that Blood reminds us of the Wounds through which that stream gushed forth. As there were Five Wounds inflicted on the Body of Our Lord by

the cruelty of man, these may serve to remind us of the robbery of the five Sacraments, which are denied so ungratefully by the majority in this country. Looking upon a Church thus mutilated and disfigured, we are led to exclaim as the prophet did in sorrow: *there is no beauty nor comeliness in Him, and we have seen Him, but there was no sightliness.\** Such is the Church destroyed and ravaged by Heresy. But the Resurrection followed, and glory succeeded to the humiliation of the Cross. So may it be with those, who may not before now have seen the perfection of the Church in her beautiful workings of love! Let them labour to heal the wounds inflicted by the enemies of the Church, and accept for their own good that perfect dispensation which the wisdom and generosity of God has provided for them; so that from these fountains of Grace they may receive hope, strength, and peace here, and find them to be secure pledges of glory hereafter!

\* Is. liii. 2.

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXXV.

ORIGINAL SIN AND JUSTIFICATION.

## LECTURE XXXV.

### ORIGINAL SIN AND JUSTIFICATION.

*“I embrace and receive all and every one of those things which have been defined and declared in the Holy Council of Trent concerning Original Sin and Justification.”*

Having completed, in a far less perfect manner than such a noble subject deserves, the instructions which the Creed of Pope Pius IV. suggests upon the Sacramental System of the Church, I now pass on to another declaration of that same Creed, concerning Original Sin and Justification. I approach the subject with a considerable degree of apprehension, as I fear that I shall not be able to invest it with the same amount of interest which attended and always does attend a view of those inventions of God's love, the Sacraments of the Church. And it seems fitting that such should be the case. It seems fitting that a study of our own fall and of its dire consequences, should not be attended with the same degree of interest as accompanies the contemplation of the working of the generosity of God and of His merciful dealing with His children. The Sacraments are the works of God: therefore they are beautiful. Original Sin is the work of man and of the enemy of man, and therefore we may expect to find in investigating its nature and its results, much that is mournful and humiliating. But there is a redeeming feature and reality in connection with it—Justification. The very sin of our first parents has been the occasion of a special intervention of God's love. In the poetical language of her Liturgy, the Church does not hesitate to exclaim: O

happy fault, which has merited to have such a Redeemer! Redemption has been because of Sin: the Sacraments have been applied as its remedy: *where Sin abounded Grace hath more abounded*;\* and so the whole process of our Justification opens to us the working of that mercifulness of God, *who, when we were enemies reconciled us to Himself by the death of His Son*.†

My purpose now is to explain to you as clearly as I can, what the Church teaches upon Original Sin, its effect upon our first parents who committed it, and its propagation and transmission to their posterity. Afterwards we shall attend to the lessons of the Church upon Justification. We shall see what this means, and the process by which it is realized in a soul. My great desire is to explain and to defend our own teaching as declared in the Holy Council of Trent, and you will find it to be in strict accordance, as the teaching of the Church always is, with what Almighty God has vouchsafed to make known to us in the Sacred Scriptures.

I. The doctrine of the Church upon Original Sin as laid down for us in the Council of Trent, may be briefly resumed thus:—1. When God created our first parents He endowed them not only with all natural gifts fitted to their state, but superadded holiness and justice, and thus formed them in a state of sanctifying Grace. He made them to His own Image and likeness, and thus they were acceptable and well-pleasing in His sight. The ignorance, concupiscence, sufferings, and other evils which we now experience had no existence in them; and death was not to be their doom, if they had only remained faithful, and had obeyed the command which God imposed upon them. 2. But they did not obey. Of the fruit of one tree they had been forbidden to partake. and the sentence incident upon their transgression

\* Rom. v. 20.

† Rom. v. 5.



was made known to them : *on what day soever thou shalt eat of it thou shalt surely die.* They had free-will, and they had a great destiny and a great future before them. God willed that they should be tried, and that upon the result of the trial was to depend whether they should be confirmed in the possession of all the gifts bestowed upon them, transmitting the same gifts and inheritance to their posterity, or whether they were to incur the penalty which had been recorded as following upon their disobedience. The temptation came, and they fell. The result was that they lost the holiness and justice which until that time had been their portion; they incurred the displeasure of God, the captivity of the devil, and became deteriorated in the gifts both of body and soul. Well might Almighty God, after such a change, when He was to rebuke Adam for his unfaithfulness, call to him and say, *Adam, where art thou ?\** For the noblest gift was gone, and Adam was no longer what he had been. Where is that image and likeness of Myself, might God say, which I impressed upon thee on the day of thy creation? How disfigured and changed are all those qualities of body and soul which I formed and on which I loved to dwell. Earth sees something now upon its surface which I never placed there. My office of Creator has been interfered with: the man that I made was in a state of grace: the creature that I now see before Me is in sin, and is under the dominion of My enemy, the spirit of evil. Adam, where art thou? Thy innocence is sacrificed: thy immortality is forfeit. Thus, then, has it been that *by one man sin came into the world, and by sin death.†*

3. But by their transgression our first parents not only lost so much for themselves, but they have transmitted sin and its penalty to their offspring; and *Death has passed upon all men in whom all have sinned.‡* For

\* 1 Gen. iii. 9.

† Rom. v. 12.

‡ Ibid.

at that time, the whole human nature was in them alone, and they injured that nature, and transmitted it in its injured state. And they knew it, as many theologians teach, and were fully aware that their children would suffer for their disobedience. Just as now-a-days we may sometimes see a family which was at one time in a state of comfort and affluence, plunged on a sudden, into ruin and misery through the dissipation of the parents, who thus leave to their offspring, not the riches which they once had, but the distress which they have brought upon themselves. And we are the children of these ruined parents. We know it, not from revelation only, but from experience also. We all have to mourn as the Psalmist; *for behold I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me.\** And under the influence of the evil which we have inherited we find within us that conflict which the Apostle lamented in himself: *I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin;* of which he had said just before: *the good which I will I do not, but the evil which I will not that I do.†* This was a severe punishment, but not unjust; and therefore we are not to murmur against the decree under which we are suffering, especially when we turn and consider the remedy which the goodness of God has provided.

4. This remedy could not be found in any power of human nature, but only in the Merits of the *One Mediator of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a redemption for all.‡* These Merits are applied by the Sacrament of Baptism, by which the guilt of Original Sin is remitted, and which is essential for that end, our Lord having declared that, *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.§* But though the guilt of

\* Ps. 50.

† 1 Tim. ii. 5.

‡ Rom. vii. 23. 19.

§ John iii. 5.

the sin is removed, so that after baptism innocence and the friendship of God is restored to the soul, and it recovers its claim to the kingdom of heaven, yet there remains that concupiscence or incentive to sin, of which we have just spoken, not for our condemnation, but for the exercise of virtue, occasioning that struggle which is the feature of our militant state upon earth, and in which no one deserves a crown *unless he strive lawfully*.\* Such is the teaching of the Council of Trent upon Original Sin. But the Council adds that it is not its intention to include under the influence of Original Sin the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; upon whose exemption from this sin, through the Merits of her Son, and owing to her connexion with Him, we have spoken fully when we treated on the Immaculate Conception.

II. The remedy for Original Sin, and the process of removing it, leads us to consider, in the next place, what we are to believe upon the doctrine of Justification. For if Original Sin excludes from the Kingdom of Heaven, and if the intention of Almighty God in creating human souls, is that each should be able to attain to Heaven, (as it is written, *He will have all men to be saved*,†) we must expect to find provision made for obtaining freedom from sin and from the captivity of the Devil. In a word, from being unjust, man must become just; that is to say, he must be justified, or go through the process of Justification.

1. Justification, therefore, is defined, “the passing from that state in which a man is born a son of the first Adam, to the state of Grace and adoption of the sons of God, by Jesus Christ our Saviour, who is the second Adam.” To this act and process refer all those familiar expressions of Holy Writ, which speak of our being *born again, regenerated, renewed, putting*

\* 2 Tim. ii. 5.

† 1 Tim. ii. 4.

*off the old man and putting on the new.* The object of the great Mystery of the Incarnation, as far as man is concerned, has been to realize for us this great and all-necessary change; *For when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.\**

2. This change can only be the work of the right hand of the Most High. We may exclaim with Job: *Who can make him clean that is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not Thou alone?†* And the change is made by the communication of the Grace of God; for Grace is that supernatural gift bestowed upon us by God, whereby we become friends of God, and His adopted children; and from being children of wrath, are made heirs of the kingdom of Heaven. When this Grace is communicated sin is removed; it is not simply not imputed, for it ceases to exist in the soul thus sanctified. Faith, Hope, and Charity are infused and take up their dwelling in that happy soul. God looks upon it and sees His image and likeness stamped in the same clear manner as when He first impressed it upon Adam. Angels look upon such a soul, fraternize with it, and see in it a companion worthy of themselves: there has been joy before them over the change which has been effected, and Heaven can show at such a time a place reserved for such a soul. This is the beauty of a soul in the Grace of God, justified from sin, and born again to God. When such a blessing is given to us, we may all say with St. Paul: *The charity of God is poured forth on our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us;‡* for at such a time we are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit of God resides within us.§

3. But this great change must be effected, and the blessing of Justification applied by some means or other. There is a difference between the justified and

\* Rom. v. 10.

† Job xiv. 4.

‡ Rom. v. 5.

§ 1 Cor. iii. 16.

the unjustified, and this difference is brought about by some act and process appointed by God. It is true that Christ died for all, and that He wishes all men to be saved; but the Merits of this death must be applied to each individual soul, and means of this application do exist in the Church. It is applied by Baptism which is essential for this end; for *unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.\** And also of Christ it is said by the Apostle; *He saved us by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost.†* And the other Sacraments of the Church, inasmuch as they are all instituted as channels of Grace, have their share to do in the work of Justification. It is for this reason that they are always impressed upon the faithful, and that they are declared to be "necessary for the salvation of mankind." And to adults who are conscious to themselves of being in a state of sin, certain preparatory steps are necessary as preliminaries to their Justification. They must be faithful to the Grace which is given to them, and not harden their hearts when God calls them; but when the great truths of eternity are brought before them, they must, beginning by God's Grace, with that fear which is the commencement of wisdom, pass on through hope to the attainment of that love which is the fulfilment of the law.

4. What is very important towards securing perseverance in Justification once obtained is the precaution which will be taken, when it is known that otherwise it may be lost again. For it may be lost: and *he that thinketh himself to stand must beware lest he fall.‡* Hence it is that watchfulness is necessary, and prayer for perseverance, and the exercise of humility, and self-denial; because the tendency to sin still

\* John iii. 5.

† Tit. iii. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 12.

continues, and will occasion the loss of Grace unless the necessity of precaution be admitted. So the Apostle chastised himself, and brought his body under subjection, lest perchance he might lose his acquired justice, and be ultimately cast away.\* Hear the awful words which in reference to this point we find used by Almighty God in the Prophet Ezechiel: *If I shall say to the just that he shall surely live, and he trusting in his justice commit iniquity; all his justices shall be forgotten, and in his iniquity which he hath committed he shall surely die.*† But when lost it may again be recovered by adopting the means which the goodness of God places at our disposal, and especially the Sacrament of Penance; for He has declared that a contrite and humble heart He will never despise. This Grace may also be increased; and by the exercise of Christian duties and the faithful observance of God's commandments, we must ever be trying to add to those talents and gifts which God has bestowed upon us, and which He intends should fructify in our soul.

I feel, my dear brethren, that I may have wearied you by detailing the process which I have, in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church, thus brought before you. But, after all, remember how much it imports you to know your duty in regard to what is so intimately connected with the salvation of your soul, and of your attaining to that sanctity which is the prelude of salvation. Here at least is brought before you a moral lesson which cannot be too urgently impressed. You will learn how God and yourself co-operate in the work of saving your soul. "He made you without yourself, but He will not save you without yourself," is the saying of a saint, which expresses a principle upon which you must always be acting. Be faithful to it, and you will know by a happy experience, that if you co-operate with the Graces

\* 1 Cor. ix. 27.

† Ezech. xxxiii. 13.

which God gives to you, He will enable you to advance from virtue to virtue, and will crown the work which He Himself has begun and brought to perfection.

III. There is still one point in connexion with Justification, which must not be omitted, as it concerns a question upon which we are oftentimes misrepresented, and upon which we maintain that there is a fatal error upon the part of those, who do not herein accept the teaching of the Church. It is the question of Faith and Works. The Catholic Church certainly teaches, and repeatedly insists upon the fact, that Justification is preserved and increased before God through good works, and that these works are not merely the fruits and signs of Justification, but a cause of its increase.\* The Church of England, in its Thirty-Nine Articles, declares that "we are accounted righteous before God, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works and deservings," and declares that we are justified by Faith only, and that good works are only the fruits and signs of Justification.† Let us see what it is that the Sacred Scriptures affirm upon this point, so that the teaching of the Catholic Church may be shewn to be in strict accordance with Revelation.

1. As Scripture never can contradict Scripture, we must in interpreting passages which are apparently contradictory, act on this principle, that there must be some mode of conciliating such passages, and some

\* Conc. Trid. Canon xxiv. Sess. vi.

† Art. xi. xii. It is extraordinary, seeing that the declarations of the Council of Trent and those of the Thirty-Nine Articles are contradictory to each other, that Dr. Pusey, in his latest work in answer to Dr. Manning, says: "I believe that we have the same doctrine of grace and justification. There is not one statement in the elaborate chapters on Justification in the Council of Trent, which any of us can fail of receiving; nor is there one of their anathemas on the subject, which in the least rejects any statement of the Church of England."—*Truth and Office of the English Church*, p. 19.



truth which such an apparent conflict actually asserts. For instance, when in one passage our Blessed Lord says of Himself: *I and the Father are One*:\* and in another says what seems so contradictory to it, *The Father is greater than I*:† these passages are easily reconciled by the admission of the very truth which they affirm, that in Christ there are two Natures; the Divine, by which He is equal to the Father, and the Human, by which He is less. If then it be the case with regard to Works, that in Scripture they are sometimes declared as not being required for Justification, and sometimes as necessary for it, we must admit a principle on which these statements, which apparently are at variance, can be reconciled.

2. There are passages which exclude works. For instance, St. Paul says: *We account a man to be justified by Faith without the works of the law*.‡ And elsewhere: *Being justified therefore by Faith*.§ And again: *Knowing that man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ*.|| And others of a similar kind asserting the same truth. And there are other passages again which with equal clearness insist upon the necessity of works. Thus St. Paul declares that *God will render to every man according to his works*: and quickly afterwards he says: *not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified*.¶ And he also says, *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by charity*.\*\* And he requires something more than Faith when he says: *If I had all faith, so as to be able to move mountains, but have not charity, I am nothing*.†† Which same charity St. John declares as essential to Justification when he says, *He who loveth*

\* John x. 30.

† John xiv. 28.

‡ Rom. iii. 28.

§ Rom. v. 1.      ¶ Gal. ii. 16.

¶ Rom. ii. 6. 13.

\*\* Gal. v. 6      †† 1. Cor. xiii. 2.

*not, remaineth in death.\** And St. Peter says, *Wherefore, brethren, labour the more: that by good works you may make your calling and election sure.†* And St. James very earnestly insists upon the necessity of good works, and shows how insufficient Faith is without them. *Wilt thou know, O vain man, that Faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works? Seest thou that Faith did co-operate with his works and by works Faith was made perfect...Do you see that by works a man is justified and not by Faith only...for even as the body without the spirit is dead, so also Faith without works is dead.‡*

3. Now my dear brethren, having cited these passages, let me call your attention to the great difference between the Catholic mode of dealing with Scripture, and that which is pursued by those who pretend to adduce Scripture against the Church. Opponents of this kind easily satisfy themselves with one or two or a few isolated passages, interpreted by themselves, unauthoritatively, and without any fixed principle to guide them in their interpretation. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, as the depository of all truth, always under the influence of the Divine Light which enables her to see the bearing of one doctrine upon another, tells us in her wisdom, that it is not by the apparent meaning of single passages, that we are to ascertain the inward soul and reality of Scripture. The same Holy Spirit who inspired the Scripture, inspires the Church in her interpretation of Scripture, when she tells us its hidden and true meaning. Each part, she tells us, is not to be interpreted independently by itself, but one part

\* 1. John. iii. 14.

† 2. Pet. i. 10. We are aware that the Protestant version omits the words *by good works*; but from the context it is quite clear that St. Peter is exhorting to make one's election sure by doing *those* good works which he enumerates in the previous verses.

‡ James ii. 20, 26

is to throw light on the meaning of another. Protestants then, are too apt to argue from those passages which I have cited, excluding works, that they prove satisfactorily, that Faith without works will justify a man. But if we find that there are equally strong and clear passages, which state that Faith alone without works will *not* justify a man, we must adopt some principle by which we can reconcile these statements, and the Catholic Church gives us the principle. It is this :

4. There are two kinds of works : one kind will not justify, and those are the ones which the Scripture excludes. Others will justify, and those are the ones which the Scriptures require. Just as also there is one kind of Faith that will justify, namely a living and active Faith : and another which will not, namely that which is dead and inactive. At the first foundation of Christianity, there was on the part of many of the converts, too great a tendency towards keeping up some of the ceremonial works of the Old Law. This matter was debated, and the non-necessity of these works was decided upon by the Apostles in their Council at Jerusalem, as we read in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts. The insisting upon those works to the prejudice of Faith in Christ and the liberty of the Gospel, was justly condemned and censured, and therefore St. Paul says : *we account a man to be justified by Faith, without the works of the law.* Therefore it is that some works are excluded. But again, as there is a danger that persons may too easily settle down into indolence, and boast too fondly that, because they have been vouchsafed the gift of Faith, they need not exert themselves to gain heaven, they must be reminded that they quite misunderstand the true nature of Faith ; and that unless works, that is to say the exercise of virtues be superadded, Faith will avail them nothing, and will even make them more responsible before God. Therefore some works are required.

5. The practical manner in which the Catholic Church

brings before us the necessity of Faith and of good works, as contributing towards our Justification and our future salvation is this. Faith is always held out as the root and foundation, and so important is it that she urges it in every way, and tries to bring all to embrace it. Have not I myself been true to this principle of the Church's acting in the very course of instructions which I am now delivering, when I commenced them with the subject of Faith and insisted then, as I have over and over again, upon the saying of the Apostle, that *without Faith it is impossible to please God?* But something more than Faith she tells us is required, or else our Justification is not realized; and so she answers us when we ask, what we are to do to be justified and saved: *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.\** To be saved we must avoid evil and we must do good. But this good, she always insists, we cannot do of ourselves, unless God help us by His Grace. It is only by the help of this Grace, that any of our works can be of supernatural value and meritorious of salvation. When done through the inspiration and assistance of God, the works are thus meritorious because of that very share which God has in them, for to deny that would be doing an injury to God Himself. Thus merit is in reality the product of the joint work of God and man: the free will of man co-operating with the Grace and gift of God. *God is not unjust*, says St. Paul, *that He should forget your work.†* And when He rewards our merits, He rewards His own gifts, is the beautiful saying of St. Augustine. So the Church does not give any handle to the unjust charge made against her, that she attaches an undue importance to works, or makes Justification to be a human rather than a Divine effect. In her lessons on the necessity of a Purity of Intention, every Catholic knows how she

\* Matt. xix. 17.

† Heb. vi. 10.

insists on the principle, that if done out of a bad motive, (as the Pharisees so often did theirs,) the very works which ought to help us on, will be of no avail, or even injurious. But with such an intention as will unite them to the works done by our Blessed Lord on earth, or if done purely for the love of God, the simplest act is well-pleasing in the eyes of God, who has declared that whoever will give even a cup of cold water in the spirit of charity, *Amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.\**

But my dear brethren, I do not pretend to exhaust this subject, and it is time I should conclude. I fear I have more than verified a statement I started with, that the subject might be considered dry and uninteresting. Uninstructive and unprofitable it cannot be, for it is too intimately connected with all that we hold most dear in time and eternity to be thus looked upon. In the question of Original Sin and Justification we have a great reality to deal with, and it concerns us much to know our duty. Entering upon life with fetters upon us, branded with a mark of an ignominious descent, we might, as St. Paul says, *groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God.†* But this adoption is given to us, and the means also are given of preserving it, and of becoming more and more justified in the eyes of God. What reason have we not to thank God for all that He has done, is doing, and we hope still will do for us. And if we are thankful, it remains for us to show our gratitude by that obedience to His commandments which is the only genuine proof of love. Our fetters, therefore, are now removed, the sign of disgrace is taken from us: the image of God appears in our soul in all its beauty by the grace which is given to us. Being children and soldiers of Christ, we feel that we can fight bravely under His Banner, and can

\* Matt. x. 42.

† Rom. viii. 23.

expect confidently that we shall be crowned if we fight as we ought. May the blessing attend each of us, which St. Paul expected for himself, when with the full knowledge of his own weakness, but with the liveliest trustfulness in God, he exclaimed: *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to me on that day: and not only to me, but to those also who love His coming!*\*

• 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

LECTURES  
ON  
CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE.

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LECTURE XXXVI.

PURGATORY.





## LECTURE XXXVI.

### PURGATORY.

*"I constantly hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the Faithful."*

Here is one of those clear declarations of Faith on the part of the Catholic Church, in which fearlessly and hopefully she declares what she believes and practises. Fearlessly: because she knows that she is teaching the truth of God, and that she is supported by His authority. And hopefully: because what she teaches is for the good and comfort of her children. To us, my dear brethren, it is astonishing that the doctrine which I have to explain to you this evening should ever have been called in question by those who believe in the Christian dispensation, and who profess to be the children of a holy, a just, and a merciful God. It is so natural: it is so Scriptural: it is so dictated by reason, and so firmly grounded on the whole teaching of antiquity, that he who denies it seems to be contradicting every principle which nature holds to be dear, and which Religion holds to be sacred. And we feel that the denial is an injustice and a cruelty. It is a cruelty to the dead, because it deprives them of a relief which the living can give them, and to which they have a sacred claim; and it is an injustice to the living, because it deprives them of the benefit which a chari-

table duty would bestow upon them, inasmuch as an office of mercy and compassion always reflects back its blessing upon him who fulfils it. Therefore then, we are astonished, and we ask, where can be the Christianity of those who break asunder a bond of love, which, as the Communion of Saints implies, connects us so sacredly with those who have passed away !

I will prove what I say; for, alas! it must be proved, inasmuch as there are those who deny it. I will shew that the doctrine is Scriptural, that it has ever been held in the Church, and that it is in accordance with the best instincts of nature; for merciful instincts, of which this is one, are not contradicted but are sanctified by Religion. But I must first explain what it is that the Church teaches on this point.

I. 1. The Catholic Church ever insists upon the principle that all men will be judged according to their works; as St. Paul says of God, *Who will render to every man according to his works.\** This is what is called retributive justice, giving to every one as he deserves by his earning. To the just is given a recompense, to the wicked, punishment proportionate to their merits or demerits. Now, in this world, besides the decidedly wicked, and the completely and perfectly good, a numerous class exists of those who are neither one nor the other. They are not so wicked in the eyes of God as to incur at His Hands an eternal condemnation, as being guilty at death of those sins of which it is written, that they who do such things shall never enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Nor at the same time are they so holy and free from every sin as to merit an immediate admission into that kingdom, into which nothing defiled can ever be admitted. For the Holiness of God is such, that He will not receive into His eternal presence, to see Him face to Face, those

who have upon them any stain of sin. Nor will His mercy allow them to be excluded for ever from the kingdom of heaven, inasmuch as that they had not altogether forfeited His Grace; but He excludes them for a time, until by a process in which His justice and mercy combine, these stains of sin are removed, and the soul is fitted to possess God and to be united with Him in that closest love which constitutes the happiness of heaven. This state of detention and temporary exclusion from heaven after death, forms what the Church calls Purgatory. Thus do the Justice and the Mercy of God prepare what His Holiness requires.

2. Purgatory is only a temporary state, and will have no further existence after the day of the General Judgment. For the Church militant, with all its duties and its jurisdiction, will then cease to exist. The Communion of Saints and the Forgiveness of Sins, will no longer have their sphere of existence here below: the offices of mutual charity will have ceased, when all the faithful children of God will have been admitted to their final home in Heaven, when there shall be no *more mourning, nor weeping, nor sorrow, for the former things have passed away.*\* But until the day of Judgment, whilst the Church militant has still its work to do, the doctrine of the Communion of Saints implies our fellowship with the faithful, not only upon earth, or in their triumphant seats in heaven, but with the suffering faithful, who in the next world are still detained from the possession of their reward. There is then a link of love which binds us with those faithful departed, for whom we pray that they may through God's Mercy rest in peace.

3. The Church teaches also that the faithful upon earth may pray, and ought to pray, for those suffering souls in Purgatory, and these prayers are acceptable

\* Rev. xxi. 4.

to God, and are beneficial to those souls. And here we see the harmony and perfection of Catholic doctrine, and how the social character of the Church, and the law of brotherly love and sympathy follows on even into the next world. For a member of the Christian Church is never to be considered as having an isolated and independent existence. The fact of calling him a *Member* implies this. For as no member of our body has a separate existence, but exists in the body and as a part of it, sympathizing and acting in concert with the rest, so is it in the Church of God, of which St. Paul says so precisely *that the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth...maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity.\** Therefore we must feel one for another: therefore we must love one another and pray for one another: and if any are in suffering, we must feel for them, and seek to give them alleviation, as we should desire to find it for ourselves. How selfish, how unsocial, and for that reason how unchristian, is the mode of acting of those who limit their prayers to themselves, or to the living, and forget the dead! They violate the command which orders us *to bear one another's burdens*, and they listen not to the admonition which tell us to mourn for the dead not as they mourn *who have no hope.*† They have no hope who pray not for the dead, for prayer is the language of hope.

4. The Church does not define what is the precise nature of the sufferings of these souls, which in Purgatory are for a time detained from God. Their detention is a suffering, for they long to possess God, and in the language of the Psalmist they exclaim: *Woe is me, because my sojourning is prolonged.*‡ And the whole scheme of atonement for sin leads to the conclusion that

\* (Eph. iv. 16.

† 1 Thess. iv. 12.

‡ Psalm.

there is a pain in this detention. Sin implies a forbidden pleasure, and its punishment is the infliction of a pain. So our first parents were punished by the infliction of sorrow and pain. Our dear Lord would redeem us by painful sufferings: and it is by *many tribulations that we are to enter into the kingdom of God.\** But neither on the nature, nor the intensity, nor the duration of this punishment does the Church pronounce. In this punishment we know that the Justice of God, which exacts it as a preparation due to His Holiness is tempered by His Mercy, and that this Mercy may be evoked as usual by prayer. And as they are in a position to be prayed for, the command to *pray for one another†* includes them; and we are therefore bound by the law of Christian love to beg that, through the infinite Merits of the Precious Blood of our dear Lord, their sufferings may be shortened and they may enter their home of everlasting rest and peace. For every soul in Purgatory is sure one day to be in heaven, and will on the day of the General Judgment be placed on the right hand of the Judge to receive the reward of the just. The Church, therefore, sympathises with them whilst they suffer, but rejoices with them too, because the day of their admittance into heaven is sure to come: and whilst she exhorts the living to offer prayers, and Sacrifices, and alms in their behalf, she reminds them that they are herein performing an act of charity, which will meet with an abundant reward.

And yet it is against this practice, so pleasing to God, so charitable to the dead, and so advantageous to the living, so indicative of a real and living faith in the Communion of Saints, and so expressive of the truth that we are members one of another, and that death itself has lost its sting when we can have hope in our mourning for those that are dead, and show our hope

\* Acts xiv. 21.

† James v. 16.

and love for them by prayer, it is against this practice so clearly taught in the word of God, and so faithfully observed in the Church from the time of her foundation, that so much violence is directed, and such misrepresentation and abuse offered by the opponents of a doctrine so natural and so true.

II. In defence of our belief in Purgatory, that is of a middle state of souls who are in a position to be prayed for after death, and are therefore not yet in their place of rest though on their passage to it, we cite the fact that it was admitted in the Old Law, and that the practice of praying for the dead was not censured nor forbidden by our Blessed Lord. 1. We have a very precise passage which tells us of the Jewish custom in 2 Machabees, where it is recorded that after a great battle, the Jewish chieftain, Judas Machabeus, *sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. ...It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins.\** The Catholic Church which has always maintained the inspiration of the two Books of Machabees, points to this text as quite decisive upon the existence of a middle state of souls after death, and upon the propriety and duty of praying for the dead. The Protestant Church does not admit their inspiration; and this very fact establishes the necessity of a principle upon which we are always insisting, that there ought to be some tribunal to decide so important a question as the admission or rejection of an inspired book. But see how satisfactory is the Catholic principle. The Church, which is infallible, is the judge in such a matter. She declares that these books are inspired; therefore we accept their inspiration as a certainty beyond all doubt,



and as an article of Faith. And how unsatisfactory is the solution afforded by the Protestant Church, which, going on the principle of taking the Scripture as the only rule of Faith, cannot possibly disprove the inspiration of these books. But even apart from their inspiration, they are universally recognized as historical books of the highest authority. And they tell us what was the custom in the Jewish Church before Christ, and that the Jews did pray for the dead. And what they did then, they do even now; for the Jews do pray for the dead, and have never lost their tradition of doing so. The thirty-nine Articles also (Art. VI.) enumerate these books of Machabees among books which may be read "for example of life and instruction of manners," and therefore sanctions their use. Consequently, from this text we are authorized to argue as follows. A book which the Catholic Church maintains to be inspired, which is a faithful record of Jewish customs, and which is admitted by the Protestant Church to be edifying and instructive, recommends praying for the dead as *holy and wholesome*. Therefore this practice has a high sanction, and is not lightly to be censured, nor rashly to be condemned as a modern superstition.

2. That sins may be pardoned after death, and therefore that mercy may be supplicated in behalf of the dead, follows from a clear declaration made by our Blessed Lord. Speaking upon the forgiveness of sins, He says: *Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him, but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come.\** Without discussing what these sins are against the Holy Ghost, most probably an obstinate rejection of His lights, and a wilful perseverance in impenitence, there is here an assertion that sins may be forgiven in

\* Matt. xii. 32.

the next world, inasmuch as these sins are excluded from such forgiveness. And whatever forced interpretation may be urged to do away with such a clear admission, these words appeared decretorial and decisive to the great St. Augustine, who maintained that these words would be unmeaning, unless some sins were forgiven in the next world. If so, where? Not in heaven, where there is no sin ; nor in hell, where there is no redemption. Therefore there is another state in the next world, and this is what we call Purgatory.

3. There is a passage in the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, which, with quite sufficient clearness in itself, and with overwhelming evidence when interpreted by the very highest authorities, asserts the doctrine of a middle purifying state in the next world. The Apostle, there speaking about the future judgment which is to be passed upon our works, likens these works to *gold, silver, and precious stones*, if good and meritorious in God's sight, but to *wood, hay, and stubble* if worthless and unacceptable. *Every man's work shall be manifest*, he continues, *for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide...he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss ; but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire.\** What else is the meaning of a man being saved, yet so as by fire to which he is to be subjected after that judgment which he has to undergo after his death, if it be not a punishment and purifying process to be undergone in the next world? Certainly these words of the Apostle so clearly express the exact doctrine of the Catholic Church upon Purgatory, that the Council of Florence, relying upon the authority of the Fathers, has declared that this is the meaning of St. Paul,

Amongst the Fathers who have so interpreted, I need only cite St. Augustine, who again upon this passage as upon the one which I cited from our Blessed Lord's words, about sins being forgiven in the next world, upholds the doctrine of Purgatory. He cautions the faithful against thinking too lightly of the pains of Purgatory, because the Apostle says that he who undergoes them shall afterwards be saved, for these pains, he says, are far more acute than any that can be undergone in this world. And for himself, he prays that God will rather send upon him trials and afflictions in this world, but will spare him from that fire of which it is said that *he shall be saved yet so as by fire.\**

From these passages alone, without citing others which are urged by many of the Fathers of the Church in support of the doctrine which we are explaining, we maintain that there is a sanction in Sacred Scripture for praying for the dead and for the existence of Purgatory. And our claim to this Scriptural authority is valuable, because we do not rest upon individual private interpretation, but upon the voice of the Church, and the venerable testimony of antiquity. How, then, can the thirty-nine Articles, with any pretence to truth, call Purgatory a "fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded on no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God?" On the contrary, how repugnant to the Word of God, and how contradictory to the very attributes of God—His Justice, His Mercy, His Holiness, and His Truth, is the teaching of those who deny this doctrine? For they either admit into heaven, upon their principles, souls which are defiled with sin unrepented of, or they cast into the place of eternal reprobation those that are stained with lesser offences, which have not utterly

destroyed the Grace of God within them. The idea of heaven which the Holy Catholic Church presents to us, is that of a place into which *nothing defiled* can enter, as St. John declares. And she tells us, too, how pure must be the soul which is admitted in the Beatific Vision to see the Face of the God of all Holiness ; and therefore that if it leaves this life unfitted by any, even the slightest defilement, for such a privilege, it would seek for purification, and be even glad to be washed yet more and more from its stain, before it could venture to see the God of Gods in the heavenly Jerusalem.

III. Upon this important doctrine also the Church has always been faithful to the tradition of the Apostles, and in every age has left records of her belief. I will adduce two or three testimonies from the early times, which alone will be quite sufficient to establish the antiquity of the doctrine of a middle state after death, and will therefore prove that this is not a fond invention of modern times. Tertullian (two hundred years after Christ) states that it was a custom to offer up anniversary sacrifices for the dead, and that although the Scriptures did not command these anniversary commemorations, they were observed, he says, from Apostolical Tradition.\* St. Ephrem of Edessa, a century later, arguing from the fact recorded in the Book of Machabees, says, that if they who had only figurative sacrifices “could cleanse from guilt those who had fallen in battle, how much more shall the Priests of Christ aid the dead by their oblations and prayers?”† Here the propitiatory effect of the Sacrifice of the Mass in behalf of the dead is clearly indicated. More clearly, if necessary, is it asserted by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in those Catechetical Instructions which I have more than once appealed to on previous

\* De Corona, mil. iii.

† Quoted by Cardinal Wiseman, Lectures, vol. ii. p. 61.

occasions. Explaining the different parts of the Liturgical service of the Sacrifice of the Mass, he says, that after the consecration, just as is done now every day in the Mass "we commemorate all who in past years have fallen asleep among us, believing that it will be a very great advantage to the souls for whom the supplication is put up, while that holy and most awful Sacrifice is presented."\* We have moreover the testimony of the most ancient Liturgies, both of Churches in communion with the See of Rome, and of early Heretical Churches which have broken off from that communion, such for instance as the Nestorians, all agreeing in inserting prayers for rest and peace for the dead. We have also extant inscriptions from stones placed over the dead in the Catacombs and elsewhere, where there is a request that the reader will pray for the soul of the departed.

There is one more interesting and affecting evidence in behalf of the same truth. I have already cited St. Augustine's testimony upon two passages of the Sacred Scripture. How he practised what he there declares to be his belief, is beautifully shown in the account which he himself gives of the death of his mother, St. Monica, in the ninth Book of his Confessions. If you would wish to read the account of a Catholic death-bed, read the last four chapters of that Book, and you will see an instance of the affection which Catholic faith and hope inspire, not at death only, but after death also. A few days before her death, with an anticipation that the time was close at hand, she discoursed with her son on the joys of heaven. They were at a beautiful spot at the mouth of the Tiber: but the good widow was far away from her African home, dear to her because her husband was buried there, and her son had been born there. A vio-

lent sickness came upon her, and when her children, who were with her, saw that her death was at hand, one of them regretting that she should die so far away from her own country, she turned to Augustine, and said: "Lay this body anywhere: be not concerned about that: but only one favour do I beg of you, that wherever you may be you will always make a remembrance of me, when you stand at the altar of God." She died: but the duties of affection were not yet at an end. St. Augustine speaks of her holiness of life and her great love of God, but unwilling to flatter, where it was more becoming to pray, he remembers the severity of God's judgments, and fearing lest there might have been even some slight sin to be expiated, he utters a fervent prayer, supplicating our Saviour through His sacred Wounds, as she had forgiven others, that He would forgive her. "Forgive her sins, O Lord, I beseech Thee: forgive them. Enter not into judgment with her, but let Thy mercy exalt itself above judgment; because Thy words are true, and Thou hast promised mercy to the merciful." The body was carried out to be buried: the Sacrifice of the Mass was offered up for her repose; and in affectionate terms, the recital ends by begging all who shall ever read it to remember at the altar his mother, Monica, that so what she herself had requested might be more plentifully performed by the prayers of many. Where else, my dear Brethren, but in the Catholic Church, could you find that same scene enacted? But here you will find it again and again. And there is not a Catholic child who has had to sorrow for the death of a Mother, but can find expression for his sorrow in acts and words like those of St. Augustine.

Surely, there can be no need of multiplying instances and authorities, when a few suffice to establish beyond any doubt that the ancients believed and acted as we do. If we follow the advice of St. Paul, and stand



fast to the Traditions which we have been taught,\* we are more than ever strengthened in the conviction, that Religion sanctifies that natural feeling which makes us hope for those that are departed, not with a vain hope which is presumption and not hope, but with a reliance on the goodness of God, that He will temper His Judgment with Mercy, and grant admission speedily into heaven to those, who for a time may be detained in their state of purgation. During this month of November, the whole Church throughout the world is with unusual earnestness making supplication for the faithful departed, that by the prayers of the Church Militant, the members of the Church Suffering may be speedily admitted into the Church Triumphant. Thus does the Communion of Saints show itself to be a reality, in which all the members of the Church are bonded together by the most practical acts of love.

IV. What I have already placed before you shows that the doctrine of a future state, in which the living can show duties of charity to the dead, is natural and in accordance with human sympathy. But if in opposition to this, it is objected that the punishment in the next life of sins which are forgiven is contrary to the meaning of forgiveness, inasmuch as forgiveness of sin ought to imply remission of the punishment also, I would only remind you of the principle I have with sufficient fulness explained when speaking upon Satisfaction, that Almighty God does exact a temporal punishment even when the guilt of sin has been remitted. We see this in all the tribulations which are the attendants of life, and in the very cases there cited from Scripture, in which such a punishment was inflicted in individual cases. If the temporal punishment be not undergone in this world, it will, as we have seen, have to be



submitted to in the next. If again it be said that the name of Purgatory is new, and does not occur in Scripture, we answer that the name is simply used as best expressing the truth which is there taught, just as we use the words Trinity and Incarnation to express other truths, though those words do not either of them occur in Scripture. Nor is it a modern word; for St. Augustine speaks of the pains of Purgatory, using the very term which we use.\* At the day of the General Judgment, it may further be urged, there are clearly but two classes, the saved who are at once admitted into heaven, and the reprobate who are for ever excluded. So there are; and the Catholic Church does not deny it; but you will remember when I told you what the Church taught upon the subject, that Purgatory is only a temporary state, and will cease when the Communion of Saints will no longer have its duties to perform, and when the Church Militant will have ceased also. And if we, in our turn, may be objectors for one moment to the strange and uncertain teaching of our opponents, we would ask whether a well-known recent decision of the highest ecclesiastical tribunal in this country, does not in reality imply that in the next world it is all Purgatory and no Hell? For any Protestant clergyman may now teach with impunity, that there may be an end to the punishment of the wicked in the next world.

Is there not, then, a great deal to be said in behalf of this doctrine in support of which we find Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Nature itself pleading and adducing their testimony? Even if difficulties are alleged, (and it would be wonderful if there were not difficulties, seeing how the doctrine has been misrepresented,) yet what mysteries and truths of Faith are there against which objections are not raised? A

\* Lib. 2, Gen. contra Manich. c. 20, and De Civit. Dei xxi. 16.

Catholic has a principle upon which he solves all these difficulties, so that they cannot shake his belief or create a doubt in his mind. An infallible voice has spoken: the Church, *the pillar and ground of truth*, teaches him, and he believes with a certainty which is beyond the reach of all doubt. And what a comfort is there not also in believing and knowing that when the grave closes over a departed friend, and he has gone into the home of his eternity, that the ties of affectionate sympathy are not severed, but there is still room for the exercise of the most practical love? There is no cruelty here, when knowing the severity of God's judgments, and knowing the purity necessary for a soul that is to look upon the Face of the All-Holy, we pray that that judgment may be tempered with mercy, and that that purity may be quickly realized by the removal of the stains, which would be an impediment to the perfect enjoyment of the happiness of heaven. And there is no flattery here either; for truth never flatters; and it is far more in accordance with truth as it is with charity also, to admit the possibility of an imperfection in the soul, than to try to force ourselves to say what we cannot in our hearts believe, that every sinner at the hour of death is admitted at once into that kingdom, into which nothing defiled can ever enter. Instead of inscribing on their tombs, a praise which may do more credit to the heart than to the head of its advisers, and which is an utterance of presumption but not a profession either of Faith or Hope, how much more pious and hopeful and expressive of Christian humility is it not, to ask a prayer for the faithful soul which has passed away into another world, where the flattery of this world can avail nothing, but where the prayer of a suppliant brother may avail so much?

But I say at the end, as I said at the beginning, that in this doctrine we plead even for the dead. Their

interests are at stake: therefore spare them, and deny not what it so much concerns them that you should admit and practise. In this argument we stand on solemn ground, even, as it were on the very tombs of the dead. We can waive nothing, for their cause is at stake. Like the Scythians of old, who when driven back by stronger force, would be obliged to fly from their homes and to sacrifice what was dearest in life, but who when they took their stand among the tombs of their ancestors, would flinch under no power, we feel a spirit of defence of our cause, which makes us plead with courage and with a certainty of success. If the living are attacked and their doctrines and practices abused, at least spare the dead. And now with one harmonious voice, as we proceed again to pray, let us all be glad to send forth before the Throne of God that prayer, which the Faith and Charity of the Church suggests to her to be always repeating: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the Mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

END OF VOL. IX.





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